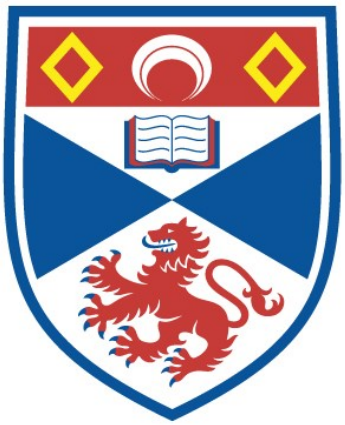
THE CONSTRUCTION OF SUCCESS AND NEGOTIATION OF MINORITY IDENTITIES: A MIXED METHODS STUDY OF THE EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES OF SCHOOL LEAVERS IN SCOTLAND

Helen Packwood

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



2019

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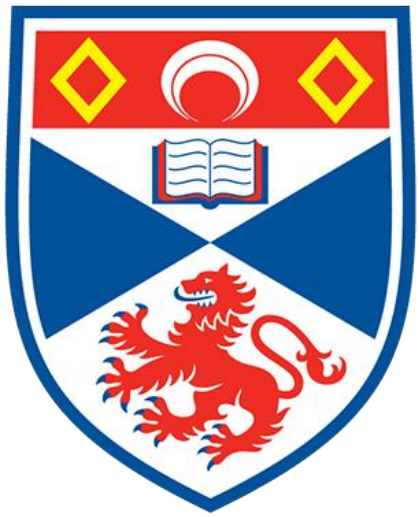

University of St Andrews

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of

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Acknowledgements

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Abstract

Each year in Scotland, around 50,000 young people complete their secondary education and leave school. This period of educational transition is laden with risks and opportunities; significant decisions are made and life chances established. This thesis explores the divergent educational experiences and outcomes of school leavers in Scotland using mixed methods and is situated within debates about structural inequalities in the UK.

Inequalities in educational achievement appear to be associated with three key drivers, socio-economic status, ethnicity and gender. Most recent research has looked at these factors separately. This study examines ethnic and migrant background alongside other axes of difference in order to gain a more accurate picture of the educational transitions of school leavers in Scotland.

The findings draw on repeat interviews with school leavers (n=34) in two contrasting secondary schools over a period of two years. In addition, a novel linkage of two administrative datasets gives a large sample allowing the analysis of national trends in the educational outcomes of school leavers between 2006-2016 (n=471,317) with detailed ethnic and social stratification. Together, these data provide a powerful analytical tool to interrogate post-school destinations in Scotland.

The analysis of quantitative and qualitative data reveal new insights on the significant differences in post-school destinations and aspirations depending on ethnic and socio-economic background. For example, White Polish and White Other pupils are less likely to go to University than any other minority ethnic group, even once socio-economic differences are taken into account. Yet the qualitative fieldwork reveals high aspirations and attainment within these groups.

This research raises questions about the persistence of educational inequalities and illustrates how this is underpinned by the ways in which educational success is constructed and measured within neoliberal educational environments and how minority identities are negotiated in the transition to adulthood.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Inequality of educational opportunity

> In the world's richest countries, some children do worse at school than others because of circumstances beyond their control, such as where they were born, the language they speak or their parents' occupations … not all children have an equal opportunity to reach their full potential, to pursue their interests and to develop their talents and skills. (UNICEF, 2018; 5)

The principal aim of this thesis is to investigate the experiences and outcomes of school leavers in Scotland, motivated by a concern for educational inequalities. More specifically, to find out how and why the educational experiences and outcomes of young people from a migrant or minority background may be distinctive. This study draws on data gathered through longitudinal qualitative fieldwork with Scottish school leavers and statistical analysis of two national administrative datasets. This introductory chapter lays out the context for the research, introduces the study aims and objectives and provides a summary of the thesis structure.

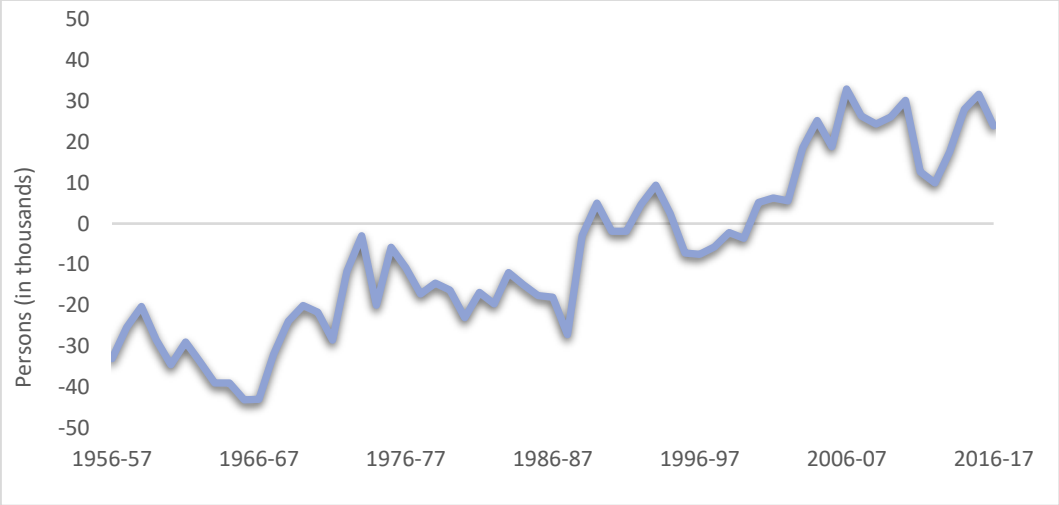
As in many other parts of the developed world, educational inequalities in Scotland persist and continue to increase (McCluskey, 2017; Mowat, 2018; Sosu & Ellis, 2014). For young people approaching the end of compulsory education, their academic attainment and school-to-work transitions remain closely associated with their family backgrounds (Eisenstadt, 2016; Ralston, Feng, Everington, & Dibben, 2016). The widening gap in educational attainment between young people from different socio-economic backgrounds has been the focus of academic enquiry as well as a policy priority for successive governments (Ball, 2017; Strand, 2016).

Scholarship has frequently exposed educational inequalities which reflect broader structural inequalities in society which are said to be widening (Dorling, 2018; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010). This includes growing evidence of ethnic inequalities (Jivraj & Simpson, 2015; Platt, 2005b) and the poverty and precarity observed among newly arrived migrants in the UK (Forbes & Sime, 2016; Laoire, Carpena-Méndez & White, 2016). The prevailing inequalities in educational achievement

appear to be associated with three key drivers: socio-economic status, ethnicity and gender. Strand (2014) suggests that, to date, most research has looked at these factors separately, with very few studies examining how they may interact with one another. In the Scottish context, the literature has focussed predominantly on socio-economic status and gender. This study sets out to explore ethnic and migrant background alongside other axes of difference in order to shed light on the differential experiences and outcomes of school leavers in Scotland.

Scotland's population is growing in diversity. Sustained population growth has been driven by positive net migration (see Figure 1-1). These demographic shifts have implications for the labour market and public policy including in housing, health, social care and education.

Figure 1-1 Net migration to Scotland from rest of UK & overseas, 1956-57 to 2016-17



Source: Scotland's Population 2017 - The Registrar General's Annual Review of Demographic Trends (Figure 5.1)

In education, the increase in diversity in schools is captured through the Scottish School Census, which shows that in 2017 more than 15 per cent of the school-age population in Scotland were from non-White British ethnic groups (up from 4.5 per cent in 2002) and more than 40,000 pupils (6 per cent) speak English as an additional language. In this context, this study examines the role of migration history in shaping educational experiences and outcomes which are likely to have a significant impact on the individuals themselves, as well as their communities and wider society. Particularly as research shows that long term outcomes for White British adults exceed those of minority ethnic groups, who on average attend

less prestigious universities (Boliver, 2013, 2016) , graduate with fewer First Class degrees (Hills, 2010; Noden, 2014), are at a higher risk of poverty (Kelly, 2016; Platt, 2007), job insecurity (Jivraj & Simpson, 2015; Simpson et al., 2006) and poorer health outcomes (Nazroo, 2003). The themes in this thesis connect with current debates about the integration of new migrants, the selectivity of social mobility and the persistence of ethnic inequalities in the UK. In a context of widening inequalities and increasing diversity in Scotland, this study is a timely contribution to understandings of educational inequalities and the transition to adulthood.

1.2 Thesis aims and objectives

This research explores the dynamic phase of educational transition, defined in this study as the period of decision making which takes place towards the end of compulsory education (age 16 in the Scottish context). It examines the everyday experiences of school leavers, capturing an inherently dynamic point in the life course, where life chances are often established (Schoon & Lyons-Amos, 2016). This is a period where significant decisions are made, notions of success are formed and where identities are negotiated (Harries, 2014; Moskal, 2014). This thesis considers how young people manage their educational transitions amid shifting ethnic and migrant identities. It examines how young people form (and re-form) their ethnic identities as they transition to adulthood and assesses the implications of this. Specifically, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What factors influence the outcomes of school leavers in Scotland?
2. How does migrant and minority background shape experiences of educational transition?
3. How do poverty, ethnicity and geography intersect to create distinct pathways for young people from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds?
4. What does a mixed method approach bring to understanding in this field?

In order to answer these questions, the study uses a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches which are longitudinal (reflecting changes over time) and multi-sited (capturing spatial differences). It draws on data collected across two secondary schools in Scotland, within contrasting Local Authorities (one urban/one rural). Repeat in-depth interviews (three over fourteen months) with a cohort of school leavers (n=34) provide rich data about the lived experience of educational transition. These individual narratives are further interrogated through analysis of two focus groups and semi-ethnographic fieldwork. The cohort includes school leavers from diverse backgrounds (gender, socio-economic, ethnic and migrant background) providing opportunities for comparison of the experiences of minorities with White Scottish/British groups. Together with the qualitative analysis, quantitative methods are used to link two administrative datasets enabling analysis of national trends in the educational outcomes of school leavers between 2006-2016 (n=471,317). Scotland's Pupil Census contains socio-economic characteristics of every school pupil and the Scottish School Leaver Destinations survey records immediate post-school destinations and the destination of school leavers' nine months later. Together, these data provide a powerful analytical tool, with sufficiently large sample sizes to interrogate post-school destinations for migrant and minority groups alongside the socio-economic correlates of educational 'success' for each school leaver in Scotland. The study design enabled the quantitative and qualitative approaches to speak to one another, with data collection and analysis in dialogue (Finney, Clark & Nazroo, 2018; Mason, 2011). Using rigorous statistical analyses of longitudinal data and innovative longitudinal qualitative fieldwork, this thesis raises questions about how educational success is constructed and measured, and how minority identities are negotiated within neoliberal educational environments, and the implications of this for the pathways of young people.

1.3 Thesis structure

The next chapter situates the research within the broad theoretical debates. It presents the conceptual context for this study by defining the key concepts and introducing the overarching theme of inequalities. Chapter 3 narrows in focus; it

examines the existing literature on educational inequalities, in particular on educational success and transitions. It also presents the evidence for substantial educational inequalities which exist in Scotland and summarises the key arguments which have been used to explain these inequalities. The fourth chapter discusses the methodological approach and provides justification of the sample of regions, school and participants which formed the fieldwork. Having set out the context for this study of school leavers in Scotland and identified the methods, the next three chapters focus on the findings of this study. Chapter 5 addresses the first research question, exploring the educational outcomes of school leavers in Scotland, using both quantitative and qualitative findings to examine outcomes and broader conceptions of success. The second research question is tackled in Chapter 6 which examines what factors influence the experiences of school leavers in Scotland and draws on the ways young people mediate and moderate their ethnic and migrant identities through transition. Chapter 7 is the final empirical chapter and examines the third research question about how ethnicity, social class and geography intersect to create distinct pathways for young people from migrant backgrounds. The final chapter, Chapter 8, discusses the key empirical, conceptual and methodological contributions of the thesis and concludes by addressing policy and future research questions.

Chapter 2 Situating the research

This chapter situates the research in a broad social, political and academic context, thereby setting the scene for the literature review in Chapter 3 which engages directly with existing research on educational inequality. This chapter begins by introducing the overarching theme of inequalities and sets out the conceptual framework for the thesis shown in Figure 2-2. Next, the chapter makes the case for focusing on inequalities within Scotland and introduces the three dimensions of difference which will be examined in the research, namely migration history, social class and geography.

2.1 Defining Inequality

2.1.1 Defining the key terms

This research is situated within debates about social justice, social mobility and the (re)production of inequality in society. The twin concepts of *equality* and *inequality* are highly contested and politically loaded ideas (Blomley, 2009). They have been debated within philosophy, politics, theology and the social sciences for centuries and were embedded in the body politic through the tripartite motto of the French Revolution *'Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité'* (Trigg, 2010). Disagreement about these concepts often stems from misconceptions about the definition and purpose of equality; who should be equal and on what basis? (Rae et al., 1981). Terms such as equality, equity and equalities are often used interchangeably but are not synonymous as discussed below. This study examines the systematic differences which we observe in the educational outcomes of school leavers in Scotland. It aims to offer new insights into these differences, advancing knowledge of what is often referred to as the 'attainment gap'. Table 2-1 provides an overview of how the terms equity, equality and inequality will be understood and defined in this thesis. These terms are discussed with reference to educational attainment in the next chapter (Section 3.1).

Table 2-1 Defining key terms in the thesis

Key term	Short definition
Inequality	The systematic differences that we observe between groups in society, which result in a gap in terms of autonomy, process or outcomes between groups of people
Equality	The state of being equal, especially in status, rights, opportunities or outcomes.
Equity	The quality of being fair and impartial; provision proportionate to need. Please note that there are also technical uses of the term in law and finance.
Equalities	Used as shorthand for the groups that need to be borne in mind when thinking about compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

Source: Author' own definitions, broadly based on OCSR Report for Scottish Government (2017)

According to the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, "Equality signifies equivalence, whereas similarity could be said to imply sameness" (Gosepath, 2011; sec 1, para 2). Using this definition, it is possible to say two objects A and B are equal in certain respects (they share some comparison-determining attribute), but differ in some other way. However, scholars have rarely found consensus on what constitutes 'equality', which gives rise to varied constructions of equality and inequality. Consider the pseudoscientific belief in racial inferiority prevalent until the early twentieth century; scientific racism viewed African populations as primitive, subhuman and racially inferior (Anderson, 2000). Therefore, finding comparable attributes and reaching agreement on who/what should be considered equal has been highly contentious. Philosopher Stefan Gosepath suggests that it helps to think of equality and inequality as issues of social justice, "not as a single principle, but as a complex group of principles forming the basic core of today's egalitarianism" (Gosepath, 2011; sec 1, para 6). Indeed, the starting point for this research is to acknowledge that equality and inequality are complex and multifaceted concepts.

In an overview of the multifaceted nature of inequality, Grusky and Szelenyi (2006) explore eight assets or types of good which they suggest are 'intrinsically valuable' (Grusky & Szelenyi, 2006; 8) and which can lead to inequalities in society (See Figure 2-1)

Figure 2-1 Types of Assets and Examples of Advantaged and Disadvantaged Groups

Asset group	Examples of types	Advantaged	Disadvantaged
Economic	Wealth*	Billionaire	Bankrupt worker
	Income*	Professional	Labourer
	Ownership*	Capitalist	Worker (i.e. employee)
Power	Political power	Prime minister	Disenfranchised person
	Workplace authority	Manager	Subordinate worker
	Household authority*	Head of household	Child
Cultural	Knowledge*	Intelligentsia	Uneducated
	Digital culture	Silicon Valley resident	Residents of other places
	"Good" manners	Aristocracy	Commoner
Social	Social clubs	Country club member	Nonmember
	Workplace associations	Union member	Nonmember
	Informal networks*	Washington A list	Social unknown
Honorific	Occupational*	Judge	Garbage collector
	Religious	Saint	Excommunicant
	Merit-based	Nobel Prize winner	Non-winner
Civil	Right to work*	Citizen	Illegal immigrant
	Due process	Citizen	Suspected terrorist
	Franchise	Citizen	Felon
Human	On-the-job*	Experienced worker	Inexperienced worker
	General schooling*	College Graduate	High school dropout
	Vocational training*	Law school graduate	Unskilled worker
Physical (i.e. health)	Mortality	Person with long life	A premature death
	Physical disease	Healthy person	Person physical condition
	Mental health	Healthy person	Depressed, alienated

Source: (Grusky & Szelenyi, 2006; 8)

The authors propose a continuum with an example of an individual at each end of the spectrum (advantaged/disadvantaged) for each asset. This model is laden with assumptions (about what is desirable/undesirable) and positioned firmly within a

western worldview (e.g. Washington A List). Nevertheless, it highlights the multiple forms of inequality which operate in contemporary western cultures. It also reveals that inequality should not be limited to debates of economics and wealth, but extends to a range of other spheres. This research will explore multiple forms of asset, or 'capital', that are listed in this table, including economic, power, cultural, social, honorific, civil and human assets.[1] Understanding inequality as multidimensional is central to the approach adopted in this study.

2.1.2 Equality of opportunity vs Equality of outcome

Before progressing further, it is important to address a fundamental question, whether equality is achievable or even desirable? As with defining equality and understanding its multiple dimensions, this is a politically charged question which has been debated for many centuries by eminent economists (Smith, 1817; Von Mises, 1927) and philosophers (Rawls, 1971; Rosenow, 1980; Rousseau, 1767). These questions, about who should be equal and why also lie at the heart of current political and societal debates about the provision of universal healthcare or the implementation of Universal Credit in the UK. Libertarian perspectives have traditionally seen inequality as a core feature of capitalist economies, which allow competition, efficiency and the effective division of labour in society (Browne, 2011; 425). This viewpoint argues that economic inequality is not undesirable and may, in fact, be used as a tool to spur some people to work harder; the system is structured so that there will be winners and losers and the unrestricted market forces will determine who falls into which group (Will, 2015). There is a large spectrum of opinion within this broad standpoint, with many libertarians arguing that intervention may be required to prevent the poorest in society falling below a minimum standard of living. The main counterargument to this economically-driven perspective is one which views inequality as detrimental to individuals and undesirable for society. This has been the subject of recent scholarship; rising inequality has been found to contribute to increased levels of violence, incarceration, drug abuse, obesity, teenage pregnancy and health issues (Hills,

[1] An asterisk marks the types of assets which will be most pertinent to this study

2010; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010), as well as adversely affecting society at large, suppressing economic growth, innovation and investment (Dorling & Simpson, 2001; Piketty, 2014).

These two standpoints have given rise to (at least) two key ways of responding to inequality (Riddell, 2009). The first is to ensure 'equality of opportunity'. This standpoint accepts that there will be a hierarchy within societies, but aims to remove the barriers for any groups (or individuals) who may struggle to access opportunities. For example, to mitigate the effects of 'circumstances outside a person's control while allowing different outcomes' (Arneson, 2015; 3) This view is founded on a commitment to ensure people have equal access to resources (economic, social, political), whilst accepting a system which is hierarchical (with winners and losers). Equality of Opportunity perspectives in health, education or the labour market actively encourage the idea that individuals can move between stations within the hierarchy, sometimes referred to as social mobility. This political and philosophical view means individuals compete, but compete on equal terms – they have access to the same opportunities. Thus, although inequality is inevitable, it is 'fair' as it is based on merit to a large extent.

The second standpoint stresses the importance of 'Equality of Outcome' and acknowledges that structural factors (beyond the control of individuals) may prevent social mobility and the chance to move between stations in the socio-economic hierarchy. This standpoint suggests a more equitable society is required before equality of opportunity can succeed (Mason, 2006). This perspective maintains that if structural factors are not addressed, then the underrepresented individuals are often themselves blamed for the resulting inequality. This latter approach, Equality of Outcome, is being used to shape current Scottish social policy (Scottish Government, 2016b) and it is thus pertinent to examine the 'lived experience' of contexts of tension between seeing inequality as both inevitable and desirable, and between equality of outcome and opportunity.

2.1.3 Contemporary debates about inequality in policy and practice

> Inequality threatens long-term social and economic development and harms not just those who are excluded, but also has the potential to undermine the fabric of society. (UN Social Development Commission, 2018; para 2)

The United Nations, like many international, national and local organisations have placed addressing inequalities (social and economic in this case) as a central priority. The quote above reveals that this policy is driven by economic theory, as well as the concern for societal wellbeing more broadly. Economists have shown that economic inequality is not simply about the operation of rational market forces and the interaction of supply and demand, but is driven in part by market and policy failures (Bell & Eiser, 2015). Extensive empirical work has been conducted to understand the underlying causes of inequalities in the UK (Dorling, 2018; Putnam, 2015; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2017). A common thread through this work has been the suggestion that inequalities are widening (Grusky & Szelenyi, 2006) and the current generation of young people are less likely than their parents to experience upward social mobility (Social Mobility Commission, 2017). The evidence for these inequalities will be discussed in detail in the next chapter (Section 3.2).

Social mobility refers to the movement of individuals between strata in society (Blomley, 2009) and although the idea receives broad support, it has not been without its critics. Diane Reay suggests that the concept is nothing more than decoy from the main issue of poverty. She argues that social mobility is a method of recycling inequality rather than tackling it (Reay, 2012). At the same time, Browne describes successive UK Conservative Governments as mystified by the suggestion that inequality is inherently undesirable. Margaret Thatcher's social security secretary John Moore echoed the commonly held view that relative poverty was simply a liberal invention, 'the poverty lobby would, in their definition, find poverty in Paradise' (Browne, 2011; 425).

Despite these divergent views, reducing social and economic inequalities has become a major plank of UK social policy in recent decades. The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission was established by the UK Coalition Government in 2010 following the introduction of the Child Poverty Act in 2010. The Act set out

to eradicate Child Poverty and the Commission (formed of ten board members) was to advocate for social mobility in the government and beyond. Each year the Commission published a 'state of the nation' report. Drawing on a detailed analysis of administrative data and qualitative research the detailed reports have provided further evidence of a 'deeply divided nation' along lines of 'class, income, gender and race' (Social Mobility Commission, 2017; iii). This corroborates the extensive academic scholarship which has highlighted the structural inequalities which make addressing this divide especially challenging (Dorling, 2015; Ridge & Wright, 2008; Schoon & Lyons-Amos, 2016). In December 2017, all ten members of the Social Mobility Commission resigned, claiming that the issue was not being taken seriously enough by the UK Government. The Commission Chair, Alan Millburn, stated that the negotiations around exiting the European Union were overshadowing attempts to address the serious and deep-rooted inequalities in the UK. The final report concluded, 'Tinkering with change will not do the trick. A new level of effort will be needed to tackle the phenomenon of left-behind Britain' (Social Mobility Commission, 2017; vii). It is within this UK context that this study sets out to understand the processes which drive inequality and undermine efforts to bring greater social mobility. Specifically, it will assess the unique role which education can play both as a potential mechanism for social mobility and as a system for embedding and reinforcing inequalities.

2.1.4 Addressing inequality through legislation

As well as an economic imperative, governments have also sought to maintain equality by removing disadvantage and discrimination through legislation. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted in 1948 laid the foundation for many of the Human Rights which are enshrined in international law today including the right to life, the prohibition of slavery, the right to freedom of thought and crucially, basic concepts of dignity, liberty and equality. In UK law, the Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to anticipate and remove disadvantage which may affect people on the basis of nine protected characteristics. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. These rights and

their implications for equality raise questions about why the combination of legislation and an economic incentive are not producing an equal society. In fact, extensive academic work has been carried out on the links between income inequality and other forms of inequality. These include inequalities in education (Cebolla-Boado, Radl & Salazar, 2016; Strand, 2014), employment (Feng, Flowerdew & Feng, 2015; Iannelli & Duta, 2018), health and wellbeing (Garthwaite, Collins & Bambra, 2015; Nazroo, 1998) housing, (Healy, 2017; Lymperopoulou & Finney, 2016) criminal justice (Cameron, 2007; Ma & Schapira, 2017) and exposure to environmental risks and benefits (Watts, 2017). What is less well understood is how these different forms of inequality interact (often termed intersectionality in the literature) and what impact this has over the life course. This study addresses this deficiency by investigating how differences in educational outcomes and experiences vary across three key dimensions: spatial inequalities (across different places), socio-economic inequalities (depending on household income or other measures of wealth) and ethnic inequalities (based on country of birth and/or ethnic identity). This research also explores how these dimensions of inequality interact, the ways in which they reinforce and embed one another and how they may work to mitigate and alleviate inequality.

2.1.5 Theoretical and conceptual framework of the thesis

Theoretical Framework

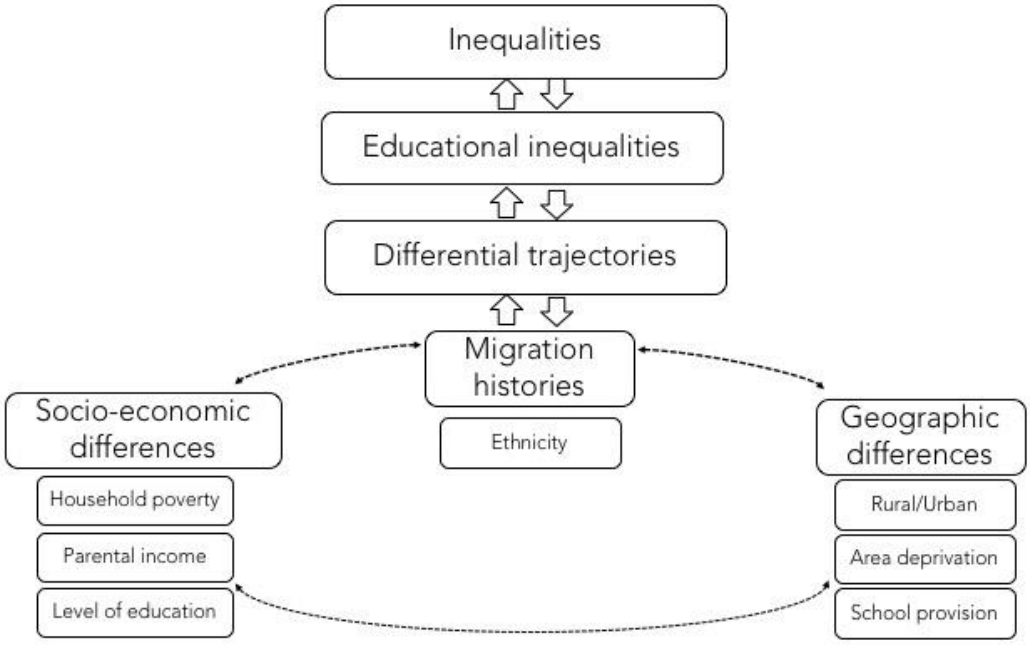
This thesis engages with several theoretical frameworks which are discussed throughout the thesis but highlighted in brief below. As Cresswell (2012) suggests, these theories provide conceptual order to a messy reality and will introduce clarity and distinction to the disparate ideas and experiences emerging from the research.

In this study, theories of Social Capital underpin the exploration of educational ‘success’. Bourdieu’s theory of cultural and social capital and Coleman’s extension of these ideas (see section 2.4.2), help clarify and develop our understanding of why some young people apparently ‘succeed’ in terms of education and social mobility while others don’t. In addition to theories of social capital, this research focuses on race and migrant background, engaging with theoretical ideas used in

the literature on Intersectionality and Critical Race Theory. These frameworks focus on being attentive to minority and migrant voices as well the interplay of multiple identities, for example gender, ethnicity, sexuality and religion. For more detailed discussion of these themes see Section 2.5 and 3.3.5. Finally, the research is underpinned by a life course perspective which acknowledges the cumulative impact of disadvantage over the life course. This theory proposes that it is not sufficient to explore significant life events (birth, leaving school, securing employment) in isolation but proposes a whole life perspective (see Section 3.1.5). These theoretical framings ensure this study of educational transition is set within the broader context of inequality across the life course.

Figure 2-2 below sets out the conceptual framework for this study which is principally engaged with the differential trajectories of school leavers set within an understanding of educational inequalities and, more broadly, multidimensional inequalities in society. In summary, the diagram highlights that inequality can both reinforce and replicate disadvantage as well as generate it. It will be argued that structural inequalities within society are reflected in the education system, which in turn leads to unequal outcomes and differential educational trajectories. These differential trajectories are modified, reinforced and at times mitigated by other forms of difference, including socio-economic status, migration history and geographic location. However, the multidirectional arrows reveal that these processes are dynamic, indicating that inequalities can shape - and are shaped by - axes of difference which can also interact and compound one another. In turn, these differences can produce differential trajectories which embed educational inequalities and serve to reinforce inequalities within society. The framework pays attention to the three areas of interest in this study while acknowledging that there are many other forms of difference which could mediate experiences of educational transition. The research looks specifically at how migration histories shape transition and influence educational outcomes and experiences. However, in recognition of the multidimensional nature of inequality, this study also examines how migration histories intersect with other axes of difference, specifically socio-economic and geographic differences.

Figure 2-2 Thesis conceptual framework



In summary, this section has explored the definitions and dimensions of inequality as well as the current policy debates in the UK. It has set the context for a study which examines the divergent educational experiences and outcomes of school leavers in Scotland. Situated within debates around structural inequalities in UK society (Dorling, 2018; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2017), it has also identified the need for a more grounded approach to studying inequality which examines it from the perspectives of those experiencing it. The next section sets out the case for studying these important themes in the Scottish context.

2.2 Scotland in context

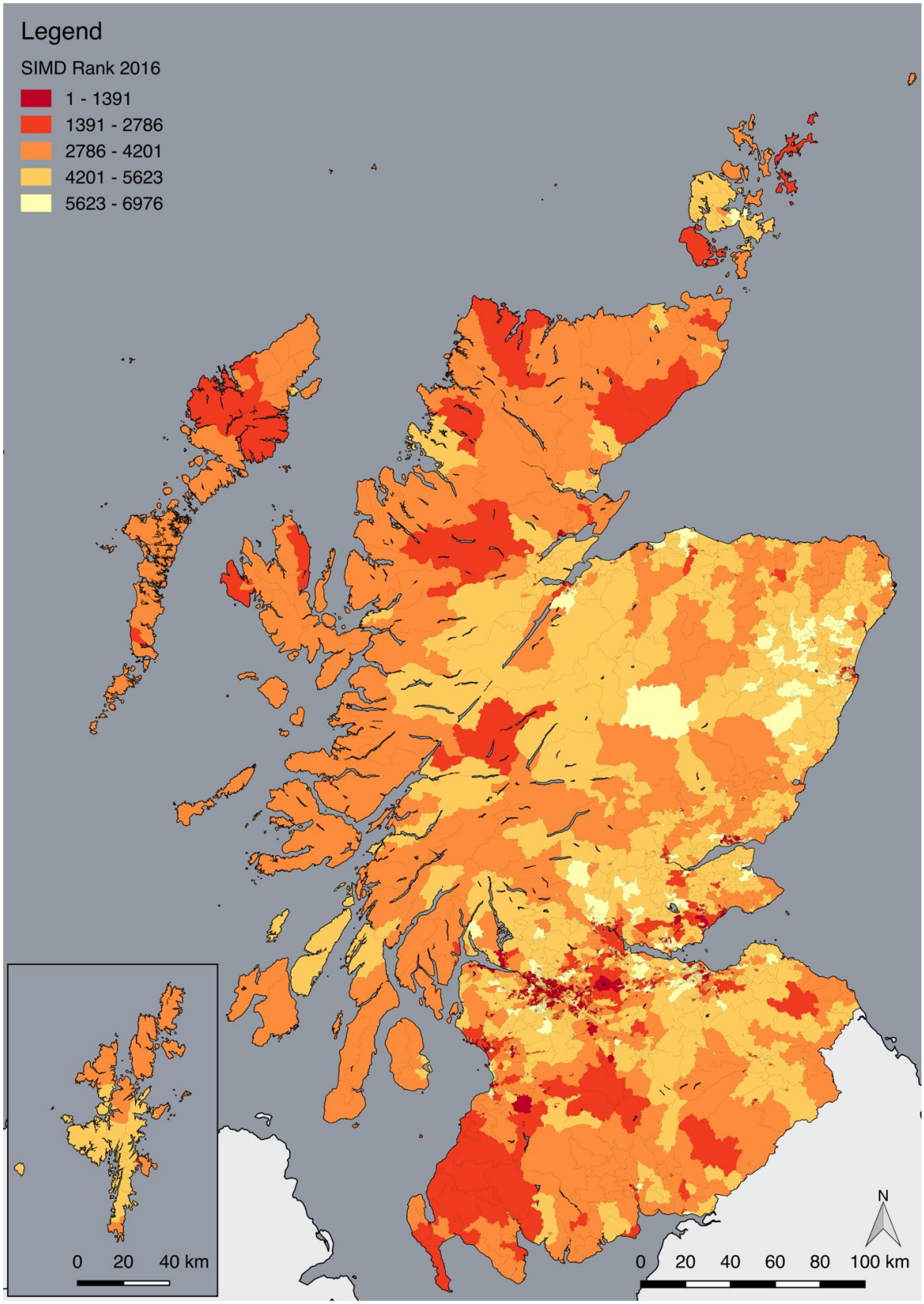
2.2.1 Inequality and poverty across Scotland

> 'Reducing inequality is not only important in itself but is vital to creating the conditions to deliver sustainable economic growth over the long term' (Scottish Government, 2015b; 7)

Reducing inequality has been a central aim of the Scottish Government which has seen it as important for economic growth as well as social justice (Scottish Government, 2015a, 2016b; Sosu & Ellis, 2014). Official figures indicate that poverty and income inequality continue to rise, following a small decline after the recent economic recession (Scottish Government, 2018b). The published figures also reveal that 19 per cent of children (180,000 children) lived in relative poverty in Scotland between 2014-17, this compares with 17 per cent in the previous three-year period. After housing costs are calculated this figure rises to around 230,000 children (24 per cent). These trends are consistent across the UK, although poverty rates in Scotland are lower than the UK average, while income inequality is slightly higher, due to the proportion of private pensions and property wealth (Barnard, 2017; Bell & Eiser, 2015).

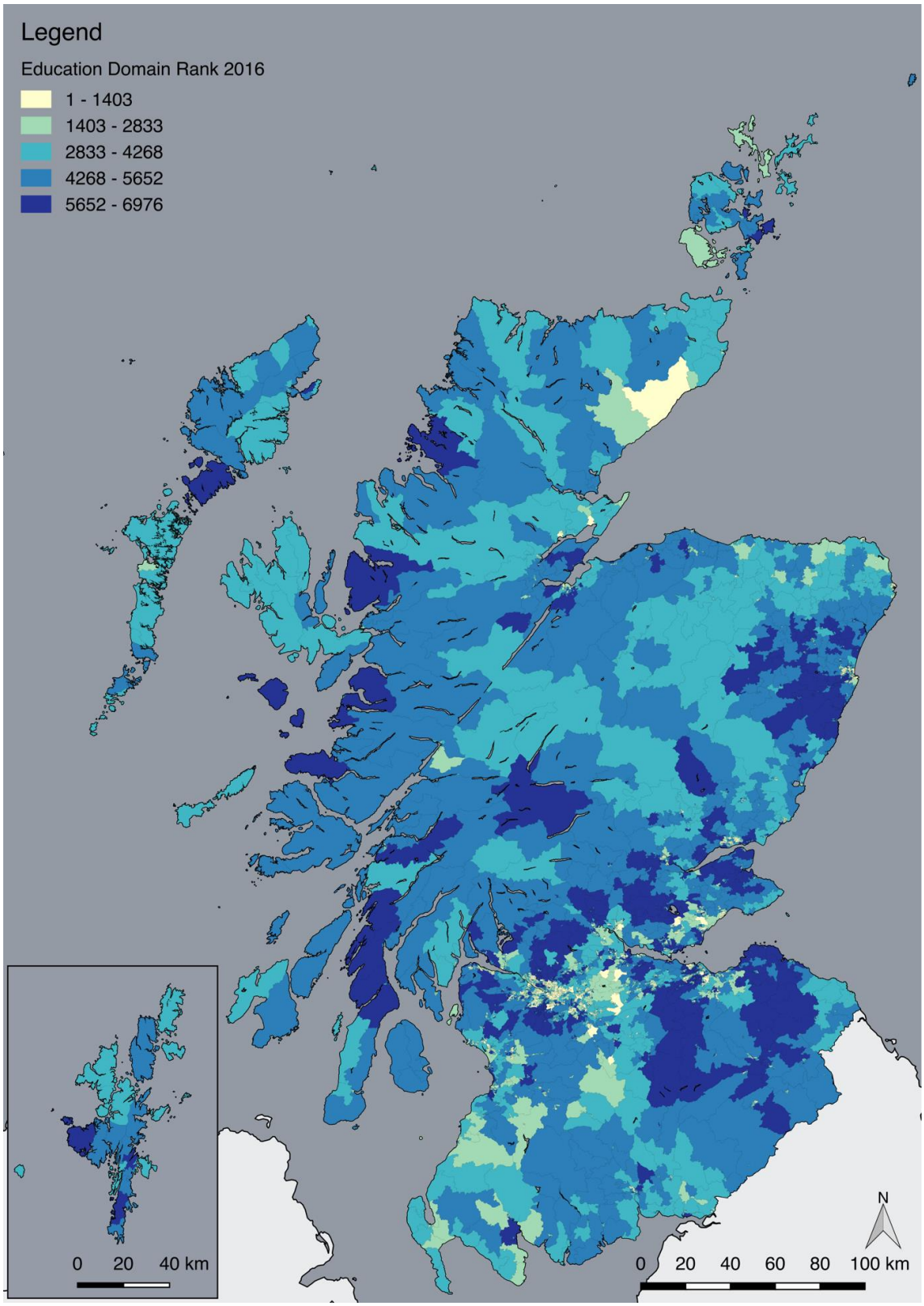
The official measure used to assess levels of neighbourhood deprivation in Scotland is the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). The measure combines several aspects of deprivation (crime, education, employment, health, housing, income and access to services) into a single index. The SIMD ranks small geographic areas (datazones of approximately 760 people) from the most deprived (ranked 1) to the least deprived (ranked 6,976). Figure 2-3 represents the 2016 SIMD rank, with darker colours indicating the communities ranked the most deprived 20 per cent. The map reveals the spatial distribution of multiple deprivation across Scotland with high levels recorded in island communities, on the mainland, across rural areas and urban centres. Glasgow City is the Local Authority with the largest share of the most deprived datazones. However, regions such as South Ayrshire and Highland also contain datazones with high levels of multiple deprivation. These spatial patterns are significant in this study which considers the role of place (geography) (as well as migration history and social class) in shaping the educational transitions of school leavers.

Figure 2-3 Overall Rank Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 (1 = most deprived)



Source: Author's representation of Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 for datazones

Figure 2-4 Education Domain Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 (1 = most deprived)



Source: Author's representation of Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 for datazones

The overall SIMD rank (Figure 2-3) combines seven aspects of deprivation or domains. The education domain incorporates statistics for each neighbourhood on the attainment and destination of school leavers, the proportion of 16 - 19 year olds not in full-time education employment or training as well as the number of working-age people with no qualifications. Figure 2-4 reveals the national picture of education-related indicators. This map shows that the central belt of Scotland, including Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee have a high density of datazones with educational-related deprivation. In contrast, some rural areas, particularly in the Scottish Borders, Aberdeenshire and Argyll and Bute have lower levels of education-related deprivation.

2.2.2 Young people and inequality

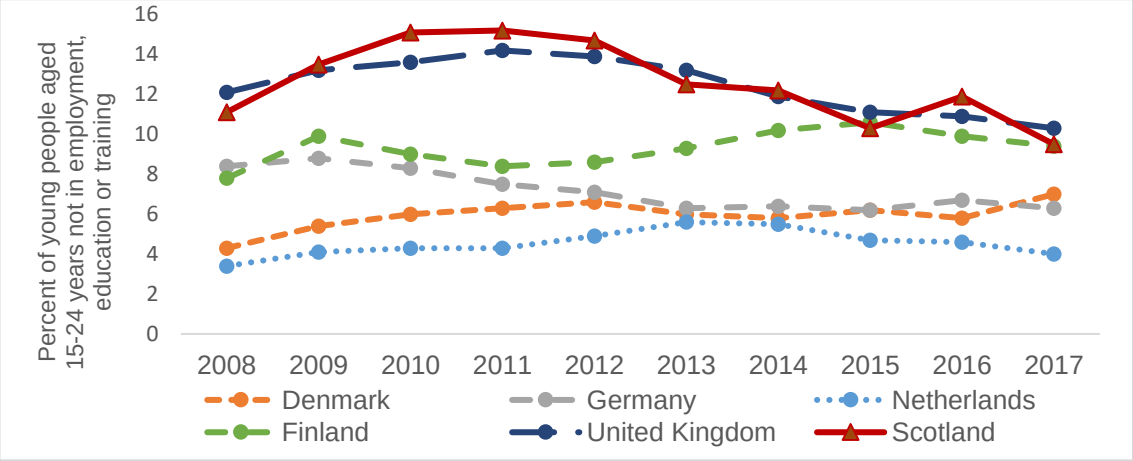
> All children are equal in Scottish society, but not all have the same opportunities. We need to ensure that the barriers to success that children and young people experience can be addressed quickly and that the right help is given at the right time. (Scottish Government, 2017b; 71)

The Scottish Government has made equality in education a central tenet of social policy. Yet, as described in Chapter 1, despite this political message there remain considerable differences between the educational outcomes of young people from the most and least affluent families in Scotland. Sosu and Ellis (2014) suggest that the gap between children from low-income and high-income households starts early. By age 5, there 10–13 months gap in problem-solving development, and by age 12–14, pupils from better-off areas are more than twice as likely as those from the most deprived areas to do well in numeracy. Outcomes at aged 16 have risen overall, but a significant and persistent gap remains. The last decade has seen extensive investment in initiatives to address the 'Scottish attainment gap' including the £750 million Attainment Scotland Fund targeting pupils in local authorities in Scotland with the highest concentrations of deprivation (Scottish Government, 2016a). There has also been significant educational reform with equality of outcome (rather than opportunity) at its heart (Scottish Government, 2016b). This focus on outcomes emerges from an understanding that a focus solely on equality of status, rights or opportunities may not result in equality of

outcomes, given that some people face more barriers than others to realising positive outcomes.

In Scotland, the minimum school leaving age is 16 which is much earlier than in many other countries, including England, where young people are required to remain in education or training until they are 18. This dynamic period of decision-making is important because there has been a growing divergence in the nature of school-to-work transitions (Bynner, 2005; Schoon, 2015). Scholars have pointed to a growing separation between 'slow' and 'fast' transitions: young people whose families can afford for them to continue in education take a slower route into the labour market by spending longer in education and delaying their adulthood; young people from less privileged backgrounds are more likely to take a faster route, leaving full-time education at a younger age, entering the labour market and assuming adult roles earlier (Jones, 2002; Roberts, 2011). Longitudinal research in Scotland has shown the long term impact of post-school destinations. Ralston et al. (2016) find that leaving school and not entering employment, education or training (often described as NEET) is a strong marker for subsequent negative outcomes, including long term disadvantages in the labour market. They suggest that these results, based on over thirty years of data, add evidence for the Matthew effect (Merton, 1968), the principle that disadvantage accumulates to the already disadvantaged. Figure 2-5 reveals that despite some progress the proportion of young people not in employment, education or training in Scotland remains high compared with several other European countries.

Figure 2-5 Percentage of young people aged 15-24 years old not in employment, education or training 2008-2017



Source: Author's analysis of Eurostat data (Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age, citizenship and NUTS 2 regions (NEET rates) [edat_lfse_38])

Beyond education, research shows that unemployment rates in Scotland are significantly higher for young people compared with adults and worklessness for the under 25's can have a significant impact on future earnings (Pullen & Dromey, 2016) with the effects of early unemployment lasting well into adulthood (Gregg & Tominey, 2004). In 2015, the Government appointed an independent advisor on poverty and inequality, Naomi Eisenstadt. Her work has highlighted a specific concern for the 'life chances of young people aged 16-24' (Eisenstadt, 2016; 6). Her report, *Shifting the Curve*, observed that the important emphasis on poverty prevention in the early years has not been matched with a similar focus on older children, despite new evidence that social and cognitive function continue to develop well into early adulthood (Blakemore & Choudhury, 2006). Further, Eisenstadt suggests that dependence on financial support from parents at this age increases the likelihood of intergenerational poverty (Eisenstadt, 2016). The report prompted a Scottish Government review of young adults' life chances, examining the transition to adulthood for young people in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2017a). The Review draws attention to the impact of gender, deprivation and ethnicity on young people's life chances. For example, it highlighted continued gender segregation in the subjects studied during education and training. The study also found that minority ethnic young people with good qualifications face greater barriers to finding work which matches their qualifications, compared with the majority white population (Scottish Government, 2017a). It is with these trends in mind that this study sets out to understand the process of educational transitions in Scotland. Educational transition is defined as the period before and after the legal school leaving age of 16, usually between 15 and 18, where young people are no longer legally compelled to remain in school.

2.3 Defining migration history

As described in the first chapter, Scotland's population is growing in diversity with implications for many aspects of society, including the education system. This section sets out the case for examining migration history in this thesis by providing

an overview of recent trends in migration and situating this within current debates about ethnic and migrant diversity in the UK. It concludes by providing a working definition for migration history which will be used in this study.

2.3.1 Migration and ethnicity in the UK

Historic trends reveal that immigration was a feature of nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain (Office for National Statistics, 2016). Following World War Two the country faced significant labour shortages as it set about reconstruction. This promoted large scale immigration to the UK and, for the first time, migrants were drawn predominantly from former colonies rather than from Europe. In the years immediately after the war, there were some refugees from Communist regimes in Eastern Europe, including migrants from Poland, Hungary and East Germany, however, the majority of new arrivals were non-White citizens from the Commonwealth nations. The largest groups included people from the Caribbean and also from India and Pakistan, the two separate states created by 'partition' at the end of British rule in Indian in 1947. During the 1950s, in particular, Britain's non-white immigrant population increased rapidly in size. During this period, immigration to Scotland remained relatively small and ethnic diversity significantly lower than in England. However, in the last fifteen years, this trend has changed.

shows the changes in Scotland's population which took place between 2001 and 2011. Although the proportion of people born in the rest of the UK remained constant, the proportion born outside the UK grew considerably, almost doubling over the decade from 3.8 to 7 per cent.

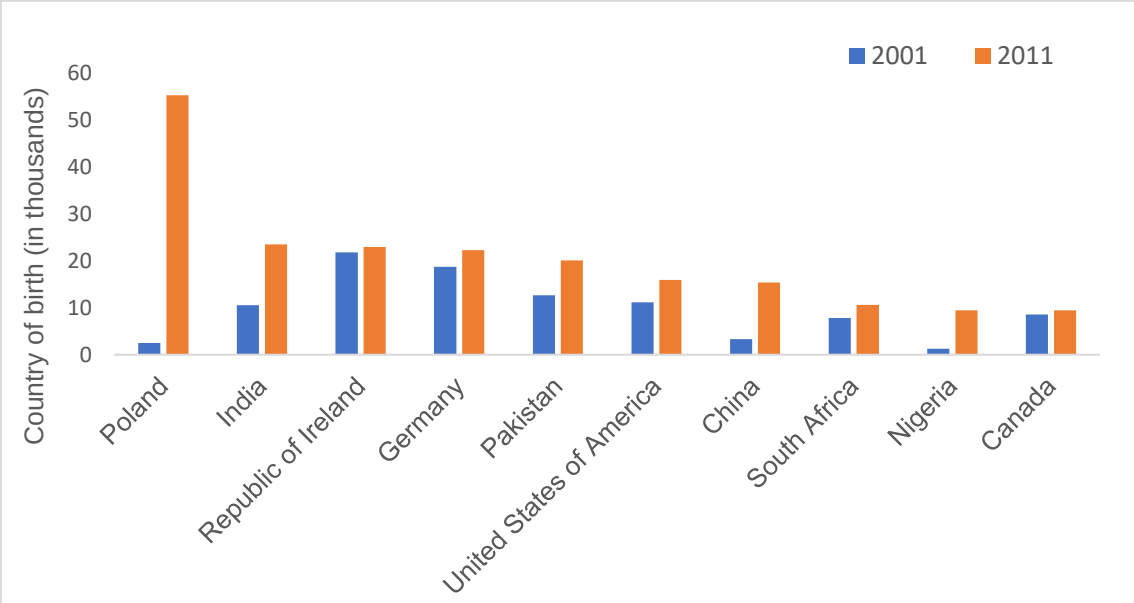
Table 2-2 Population of Scotland in 2001 and 2011

	Percentage of Scotland's total population	
	2001	**2011**
Born in Scotland	87.13	83.32
Born in the rest of the UK	9.09	9.71
Born outside the UK	3.78	6.97
Total Population	100	100

Source: 2001 and 2011 Scotland Census, National Records of Scotland. Adapted from Table CAS 015

The Census figures remain the most reliable estimate of population trends but changes have taken place since 2011. The more recent mid-year estimates reveal that these trends have continued with an increase in net migration to the UK since 2011. In 2017, for example, there were 378,000 non-British nationals living in Scotland, comprising 7 per cent of Scotland's population (National Records of Scotland, 2018). Figure 2-6 shows the origins of these newly arrived migrants and the changes which took place between 2001 and 2011. Most notable is the Polish population which rose from 2,500 in 2001 to just over 55,000 in 2011. In 2004, the accession of East European countries to the European Union (EU) led to a significant increase in the inflow of 'new' EU citizens to the UK, including into Scotland. These citizens sometimes referred to as A8 migrants, came from eight countries that joined the EU in May 2004 – the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. A further two countries joined the EU in January 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania) and according to the 2011 Census, just over one million A8 and A2 EU migrants reside in the UK.

Figure 2-6 Non-UK born population of Scotland 2001 and 2011 by country of birth



Source: Author's analysis of 2001 and 2011 Scottish Census, National Records of Scotland, Table UV08

Table 2-3 summarises some of the key distinctions between the non-UK born population in England and Scotland from the 2011 Census. This table reveals the difference in the relative size of the migrant groups in Scotland and England in 2011. For example, people born in Poland make up twice the proportion of non-UK born population of Scotland (15 per cent) compared to England (7.7 per cent).

Table 2-3 Non-UK born population in Scotland and England in 2011

Scotland n=191,571			**England n=7,337,139**		
	Place of birth	**Percent of the non-UK born population**		**Place of birth**	**Percent of the non-UK born population**
1	Poland	15	1	India	9.3
2	India	6.4	2	Poland	7.7
3	Republic of Ireland	6.2	3	Pakistan	6.5
4	Germany	6	4	Republic of Ireland	5.4
5	Pakistan	5.4	5	Germany	3.6
6	United States of America	4.3	6	Bangladesh	2.8
7	China	4.2	7	Nigeria	2.6
8	South Africa	2.9	8	South Africa	2.5
9	Nigeria	2.6	9	United States of America	2.4
10	Canada	2.6	10	Jamaica	2.2

Source: 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics and National Records of Scotland

Finally, Table 2-4 provides an overview of ethnic groups in Scotland. It reveals that there is a large variation in the proportion of people born in the UK from different ethnic groups. For example, around 90 per cent of White Polish and White Other were born outside the UK, whilst the majority of Caribbean and Black were born in the UK. These figures reflect the historic migration flows explained above and set the broad context for this study which will examine the impact of ethnic and migrant identities.

Table 2-4 Ethnic Groups in Scotland 2011 with ethnic group as a percent of the Scottish population and percent born outside the UK.

	Population size	Ethnic group as percentage of Scottish population	Percent born outside the UK
White			
Scottish	4,445,678	84.0	1.2
Other British	417,109	7.9	5.2
Irish	54,090	1.0	38.6
Gypsy/Traveller	4,212	0.1	11.7
Polish	61,201	1.2	90.2
Other White	102,117	1.9	87.0
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	**19,815**	**0.4**	**26.4**
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British			
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	49,381	0.9	42.5
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	32,706	0.6	67.0
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	3,788	0.1	58.0
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	33,706	0.6	74.2
Other Asian	21,097	0.4	83.8
African			
African, African Scottish or African British	29,186	0.6	79.4
Other African	452	0.0	85.2
Caribbean or Black			
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	3,430	0.1	47.5
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	2,380	0.0	37.6
Other Caribbean or Black	730	0.0	78.4
Other ethnic groups			
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	9,366	0.2	73.5
Other ethnic group	4,959	0.1	78.4
All people	**5,295,403**	**100**	

Source: 2011 Scotland Census table, adapted from Table KS201SC and DC2205SC

2.3.2 What is ethnicity and how is it measured?

The year 2018 marks 50 years since the first UK Race Relations Act of 1968 was introduced. This legislation made it illegal to refuse housing, employment or public services to a person on the grounds of colour, race, ethnic or national origins (HM Government, 1968). This Act and subsequent legislation have not eliminated ethnic discrimination or disadvantage which continues to exist in areas such as health (Nazroo, 2003; Weber & Fore, 2007), housing (Lukes, de Noronha & Finney, 2018), the labour market (Catney & Sabater, 2015; Mok & Platt, 2018; Simpson, Purdam, Tajar, Pritchard, & Dorling, 2009) and education (Lymperopoulou & Parameshwaran, 2015; Price, 2015). Despite the evidence for ethnic inequalities, society often struggles to discuss race (Harries, 2014; Winant, 2004). Post colonialism, civil rights, and an era of equal opportunities have not ushered in the peaceful and inclusive society envisioned by Martin Luther King or British legislators. Sociologist Bethan Harries suggests that although the idea of a post-racial society has generally been met with scepticism, 'little has been done to explore the everyday effects of living with these processes, including how they might be resisted' (Harries, 2014; 1108). This study focuses on the role of ethnic and migrant identities through transition and will focus on the experiences of young people in an education system which portrays itself as tolerant, inclusive and racially diverse (Reay et al., 2007). This theme of ethnic inequality will be visited in greater depth in the next chapter with particular reference to young people. However, the paragraphs which follow provide a brief summary of the term ethnicity and how it will be defined in this thesis.

Ethnicity has been conceptualised along two broad axes; ethnicity as identity and ethnicity as structure (Nazroo, 1998). Ethnicity can be viewed as absolute and fixed (Okamura, 1981) or as dynamic, relational and ultimately a social construct (Parekh, 2008). The first approach focuses on family origins such as nationality, race and intrinsic physical differences associated with a particular background. The second views ethnicity like all identities as multi-faceted and fluid; a culmination of overlapping factors which are cultural, behavioural and identity based. Ethnic identity can be shaped by where someone was born, language, religion, culture race and migrant background. Crucially ethnic identities can be self-assigned, but are also asserted by others through processes of racialisation (Finney et al., 2018).

These ideas are significant when examining the divergent outcomes and experiences of young people from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Societal debates around race and ethnicity have often been overly simplistic (migrant vs non-migrant), reductionist (white vs non-white) and susceptible to being hijacked by anti-immigrant agendas (Holloway, 2016).

Historically, the word 'ethnicity' originated in ancient Greece and was first used to describe a group of people ('ethnos') who were not of Judeo-Christian background. It remained a description for 'heathens' or 'pagans' until the mid-nineteenth century, when it evolved to highlight racial characteristics (Eriksen, 1992; 4). The European colonial project and the end of the slave trade ensured race was at the heart of scientific, social and political debates (Nash, 2003). Darwinian ideas and 'scientific racism' handed the concept of race both power and influence, for example, the post-colonial discourse has described how these racist ideologies helped to justify the colonial enterprise (Harris, 2004). As Empire faded and attention turned to conflicts in Europe, ideas about race began to shift. By 1945, at the end of World War Two the full extent of the (racially bound) holocaust was understood and the theory of scientific racism was formally rejected (Favell, 1998). Tainted by its association with the Nazi regime, race has largely been replaced with the word ethnicity in the UK (Alexander, 2009). The terms ethnicity and race both continue to be used, but have been conceptualised in distinct ways. The US focuses predominantly on race, continental Europe focuses on migration history, and the UK has adopted the term ethnicity.

The measurement of ethnicity remains contentious because the question of what is being measured is inseparable from the (political) purposes for which the statistics are intended. The 1991 UK Census included a question on ethnicity for the first time, generating academic and political interest (Bulmer, 1996; Coleman & Salt, 1996). The Office of Populations, Censuses and Surveys (now the Office for National Statistics) commissioned four volumes of analysis of the ethnic question data, fuelling discussion on the topic within and beyond the academy. In the 2010 Equality Act, race includes a person's skin colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. Measuring ethnicity, which in administrative data is often self-assigned (and within educational data is assigned by parents when a child first enters the education system), represents a considerable challenge. Questions

about how ethnicity is measured will be discussed in the fourth chapter which outlines the methodological approaches in this study.

2.3.3 Migration history defined for this study

Migration remains a complex process which links to a range of social, cultural, political and economic structures and processes. Human geographers have made a significant contribution to scholarship on these processes and their spatial patterns (Castles & Miller, 2009). The subdiscipline of population geography has pursued a focus on migration studies and also engaged with wider social theories, including feminism (Graham & Boyle, 2001; Valentine, 2000) and contemporary theories of childhood (Laoire, White, Tyrrell, & Carpena-Méndez, 2012). This thesis draws on the methodological and conceptual approaches used within population geography and also draws on cognate fields of study which contribute to debates on educational inequality and youth transition. In defining migration history, it uses the term as other population geographers have to identify individuals who differ in terms of their (im)migration history, their cultures, customs and traditions, their religion and culture (Finney, 2011). The phrase 'migration history' captures the diverse backgrounds of the participants in the empirical work who represent a wide range of linguistic, cultural, racial and historic backgrounds (see Table 4-9– list of participants). 'Migration history' acknowledges the multifaceted, fluid and scalar nature of ethnic identity and reflects the heterogeneous backgrounds of young people living in Scotland today.

2.4 Defining other axes of difference

As described in Chapter 1, the prevailing inequalities in educational achievement appear to be associated with three key drivers, socio-economic status, ethnicity and gender (Strand, 2014). The contextual material in this chapter has also highlighted the importance of spatial and socio-economic differences, most notably through Figure 2-3 and Figure 2-4 which vividly demonstrate the spatial distribution of multiple deprivation across Scotland.

2.4.1 Defining geography

> Human geography's concern with 'place', why different localities come to be as they are, has often led it to the study of how those different elements come together in particular space to form the complex mosaic which is the geography of society. (Massey, Allen & Anderson, 1984; 1)

In their book, *Geography Matters,* Massey et al. (1984) set out the importance of human geography in examining several core relationships including the social and the spatial which is the focus of this research. Geography will be examined (alongside ethnicity and social class) in terms of the shaping influence it has on educational inequalities. The study explores to what extent school catchment and area deprivation influence outcomes and whether living in a more rural or urban setting influences experiences of educational transition. As outlined in the conceptual diagram Figure 2-2 on page 16, geography links closely with dimensions of poverty and ethnicity. A number of studies, particularly in the geographic literature, have examined the importance of the different spaces implicit in young people's transitions (Moskal, 2015; Valentine, 2003).

Young people are situated within several important geographic realms which the literature suggests may make a difference in their outcomes and experiences (Lymperopoulou & Finney, 2016). First, the residential location of young people in this study is important. Communities may have particular characteristics and this spatial geography has been theorised and a large literature exists on neighbourhood effects (Clark & Drinkwater, 2002; Galster, 2012). This will be discussed in the next chapter (see section 3.3.6). Beyond where young people live, i.e. their street or local community, they will also be situated within a school catchment and for this study, the location and composition of the school will also need to be considered. Again this has been the focus of extensive work, examining the role of schools and school management (Strand, 2016). The Scottish Government has long resisted the notion of a league table of schools in Scotland, however, there is some evidence of a 'schools effect'. These can be judged using various metrics including its socio-economic or ethnic composition, its denominational affiliation, its size, its exam results, or rates at which school leavers progress to Higher Education (Croxford & Raffe, 2014; Iannelli & Duta, 2018; Riddell, 2009). At the next scale, these schools are also located within Local Authorities which have their own Education departments and strategies

(Kavanagh, Lee & Pryce, 2016; Kwong, 2011). Finally, the extent to which a school is urban or rural, and whether the home address of a young person is urban or rural will be considered. Spatial inequalities have an influence on both educational provision and educational experiences and so these key factors will be reflected upon in this study. These aspects of spatial difference are returned to in the Methodology chapter and revisited through the empirical chapters.

2.4.2 Defining social class

There has been a resurgence of interest in social class and the escalating social inequalities in society (Dorling, 2018; Jones, 2015; Savage, 2015). Early attempts to define and stratify social status relied heavily on measuring occupational status and material wealth (Mood, 2017). However, significant changes in the social, cultural and geopolitical landscape make understanding social class increasingly complex (Savage et al., 2013). The processes described in this chapter, the multifaceted nature of inequality (see Figure 2-1) to the changing demography of Scotland (see Chapter 1), have all led to changes in the understanding of social class. Social class is now understood as multi-dimensional with a focus on social, cultural as well as economic capital. In his seminal work 'Cultural reproduction and social reproduction', French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu outlined his theory of how cultural and social values are sustained over the life course of the individuals and are reproduced intergenerationally (Bourdieu, 1984). These 'cultural' and 'social' values have come to represent any social collective identity, such as the reproduction of gender and ethnicity, but Bourdieu was specifically concerned with the production and reproduction of social class (Bourdieu 1973; Bourdieu and Passeron 1990). Bourdieu's thesis examines the process by which children's class membership is largely shaped (and determined) by the social class of their parents. For Bourdieu, education is one of the central systems through which cultural reproduction ensues, particularly in participation (or lack thereof) in higher education (Bourdieu 1973). He argued that this gives a significant social and economic advantage over others who do not have such qualifications and creates a divide between these two groups, which then continues to sustain the divisions within the class system over time. Bourdieu, therefore, attempts to integrate a sociological perspective into education and learning by drawing in concepts such

as power, inequality and social ordering (Jenkins, 2014). Bourdieu's early work has laid the foundations for research today on social class hierarchies. A national survey, sponsored by the BBC and published by sociologist Mike Savage et al. (2013) adopted a more complex and multidimensional assessment of social class, drawing on Bourdieu's work. The study identified seven different classes and connected social class to economic, social and cultural capital rather than occupational status (Table 2-5).

Table 2-5 Summary of Social Class

Elite	The most privileged group in the UK, distinct from the other six classes through its wealth. This group has the highest levels of all three capitals
Established middle class	The second wealthiest, scoring highly on all three capitals. The largest and most gregarious group, scoring second highest for cultural capital
Technical middle class	A small, distinctive new class group which is prosperous but scores low for social and cultural capital. Distinguished by its social isolation and cultural apathy
New affluent workers	A young class group which is socially and culturally active, with middling levels of economic capital
Traditional working class	Scores low on all forms of capital but is not completely deprived. Its members have reasonably high house values, explained by this group having the oldest average age at 66
Emergent service workers	A new, young, urban group which is relatively poor but has high social and cultural capital
Precariat, or precarious proletariat	The poorest, most deprived class, scoring low for social and cultural capital

Source: Summary of Table 5 from the BBC's Great British Class Survey Experiment (Savage et al., 2013, 230)

However, the research has attracted some criticism, in part because of methodological concerns about sample size and representation and also the fear that this simplified perspective overlooks an unequal distribution of power, a concept which was central to Bourdieu's understanding of class. Despite some debate about the exact classification, there is consensus about the connection between social class and educational attainment. A recent report by the Social Mobility Commission claimed that 'there remains an entrenched and unbroken correlation between social class and educational success' (Social Mobility Commission, 2017; 5). As outlined in Chapter 1, there are significant educational

inequalities in Scotland, with academic attainment closely associated with family background (Lenkeit, Caro & Strand, 2015; Sosu & Ellis, 2014).

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has established the theoretical and geographical context for this study. It has situated this research within theoretical debates about inequality and contested ideas of migration history. It has also set out the rationale for considering two further axes of difference, namely geography and social class. In this final section, there is an outline of the integrated approach which will be adopted in this study.

The key concepts outlined above (migration history, geography and social class) could each become the sole focus of research in this study. Each has been shown in the literature to have a shaping influence on educational transitions and could be studied in isolation. However, one central purpose of this study is to examine the links between them. Theoretically and methodologically, it will adopt an integrated approach, viewing these core concepts as individually important, but intrinsically connected. It will examine multiple axes of difference concurrently and focus on the theory of how these different types of disadvantage interact and with what consequences. This approach is commonly referred to as intersectional research (Weber & Fore, 2007).

The term intersectionality originated in the academic literature and is fast becoming popular in media and political discourses. Kimberley Crenshaw's seminal work on Black Feminism pointed to the need to understand race and gender as identities which enhance and reinforce each other (Crenshaw, 1991). The term is now understood as the study of intersecting social identities and their related systems of oppression or discrimination (McCall, 2005). In the context of this study, it is important to view how transition is shaped by migration history and socio-economic differences across different geographies. The research resists the idea that race and class are 'distinct variables locked in a struggle for legitimacy as explanations for social, economic and cultural marginalisation' (Rhodes, 2013; 64). As Rhodes suggests, 'pitting race and class as binary opposites leads to a failure to see that

race interacts with class and enhances and modifies its impact' (Rhodes, 2013; 64). At the heart of this doctoral study is an integrated approach which sets out to draw together concepts and methodological approaches which are often addressed separately.

This chapter has set the scene by introducing the broad theoretical and conceptual framework for this study. It has examined the context for studying inequality in general and more specifically inequalities within Scotland. Next, there was a review of three dimensions of difference: migration history, geography and social class. The next chapter will move from these broad concepts to a narrower focus on literatures on educational inequalities and transitions. It will review the existing literature, highlighting specific gaps in current understanding of the experiences and outcomes of school leavers in Scotland.

Chapter 3 Literature Review

The previous chapter outlined the broad conceptual context for this study. The key concepts have been defined and the overarching theme of inequalities has been introduced. This chapter narrows the focus and examines the key theme of this thesis, educational inequalities. The topic is examined from three angles; theoretical debates on educational inequality, evidence for educational inequality and explanations for these inequalities. The chapter begins by reviewing the paradox in debates on the purpose of education: how education is understood both as a tool for encouraging social mobility and as an arena that reflects and even embeds social inequalities. Next, empirical studies are reviewed which highlight that educational inequalities exist, and outcomes vary by ethnicity, gender and class. Finally, the chapter focuses on the explanations for these educational inequalities.

3.1 Introducing educational inequalities

3.1.1 Education as a tool for (re)creating social (in)justice

There is a paradox within debates on educational inequalities. On the one hand, education has been viewed as a tool for promoting social justice and upward social mobility (Blanden, Gregg & Machin, 2003; Smith, 2000), an emphasis, which, according to Loveday (2015), has proliferated especially in governmental discourses (examples include Scottish Government, 2016a, 2017b; Social Mobility Commission, 2017). At the same time, critics contend that education systems are currently a mechanism for reproducing and embedding inequalities rather than counteracting them (Dorling, 2015; Gamoran & Bruch, 2017; Reay, 2012).

The links between education and wider concerns for social justice and improved social mobility are long-standing (Weedon, McCluskey, Riddell, & Ahlgren, 2010). The history of education development in Britain has its roots in wider social reforms (Meyer, 2014; Platt, 2005a). The Victorian era saw great improvements in

employment conditions and eradication of child labour. These reforms provided the backdrop for the introduction of a universal education system in 1870 in England and Wales and 1872 in Scotland (Platt, 2005a; Weedon et al., 2010). The early architects of the education systems in the UK sought to ensure children from all backgrounds were able to access education. It was the Educational Act of 1944 which introduced free secondary education for all and was simultaneously heralded a triumph for the working classes and paternalistic by some in the upper classes (Simon, 1986). Nevertheless, a tripartite education system was developed in Britain which remained law for over half a century (replaced by the Education Act 1996). This system of grammar, secondary technical and secondary modern schools allowed a far higher proportion of young people to attend higher education, regardless of their socio-economic background (Paterson & Iannelli, 2007). In theory, the framework was established for a more equal society based on universal access to education. This hypothesis, that education is a mechanism for addressing social inequalities remains a popular and pervasive idea. Research consistently demonstrates that the accumulation of education (primary, secondary and tertiary) is linked with higher earnings over the lifecourse (Belfield et al., 2018; Britton, Dearden, Shephard, & Vignoles, 2016; Caplan, 2018) as well as identification with a higher social class (Lehmann, 2009; Loveday, 2015). However, this direct association between education and upward social mobility is also highly contested as will be discussed below.

Education systems are inevitably a reflection of the societies they operate within (Platt, 2005a; Tawney, 1964). Brighouse and Swift (2014) draw attention to the widespread inequality in industrialised societies, where 'socially produced rewards – income, wealth, status and positions in the occupational structure and the opportunities for self-exploration and fulfilment that come with them – are distributed unequally' (Brighouse & Swift, 2014; 15). They argue that education is a critical gateway to accessing these rewards and opportunities. However, they point out that this ideal hinges on the existence of a socially just education system. Numerous scholars have sought to identify what such a system would look like (Dorling, 2018; Reay, 2012) and Brighouse and Swift (2014) identify two main conceptual approaches, a meritocratic system and a purely effort-based conception (See Table 3-1 for summary).

Table 3-1 Conceptualising Equal Education Systems

Equalities Approach	Definition
The meritocratic conception	An individual's prospects for educational achievement should be a function of that individuals talent and effort, but they should not be influenced by social background.
The effort based or 'radical conception'	An individual's prospects for educational achievement may be a function of their individual effort, but it should not be influenced by her social background or their level of talent.

Source: Based on (Brighouse & Swift, 2014; 16-17)

The education system in the UK was founded on the principle of meritocracy; the idea that educational achievement should be based on talent and effort rather than parental background (Boudon, 1974; Tawney, 1964). However, the current national trends, which will be discussed below, reveal that contrary to these aims, there are significant differences in educational attainment based on gender, social class and ethnicity (Carter-Wall & Whitfield, 2012; Lenkeit et al., 2015; Sosu & Ellis, 2014). Brighouse and Swift (2014) argue that the concept of meritocratic educational achievement appears to have fundamental flaws. Firstly, the word 'talent' is ambiguous. It raises questions about whether talent is something we are born with (natural talent) or whether it can be developed. Natural talent may be influenced by a range of factors which occur prenatally (diet, lifestyle and health of mother) and therefore would not be immune to a range of socio-economic factors. Equally, if talent is 'developed', then the background (material, social, cultural and economic resources) of an individual will have significant influence on talent. Using this logic, the adoption of a meritocratic conception of equality is problematic. Whatever a child is born with, their ethnic background, class, the resources they have and the neighbourhood they lives in– will immediately start to impact on her development. In her critique of the current education system, Diane Reay (2012) argues that opportunities remain very unequally distributed, with 'educational inequalities inextricably bound up with social inequalities' (Reay, 2012; 529). Brighouse and Swift (2014) go on to argue that educational equality cannot be based on meritocracy, because talent (which is unequally distributed) is core to its definition. They propose an alternative conception, calling it a radical approach.

This definition incorporates the meritocrat's rejection of the influence of social class, but also rejects the influence of talent. This allows for effort to influence outcomes because, according to Brighouse and Swift (2014), effort is generally considered a genuine marker of responsibility.

These conceptions of a more equal education system provide a theoretical context for understanding the review of empirical studies which follow, highlighting that the underlying driver of inequalities may be the focus on a meritocratic education system which reifies talent and effort at the expense of how talent is formed. This framework also sheds light on the broader context of educational theory and practice as it has evolved in the UK over time. Educational systems frequently mirror the highly uneven societies in which they exist (Harvey, 1973; Townsend, 1979) increasing the potential for inequality in societies to be reproduced within the education system (Dorling, 2015; Reay, 2012). German philosopher Stefan Gosepath goes further, arguing that a fair education system cannot operate in an unjust society (Gosepath, 2014). He points back to nineteenth-century theologian and philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher who was among the first to recognize that education could be both a means of perpetuating injustice and addressing it. Schleiermacher suggested that a child receives two types of education at school, 'functional education', the social and cultural education imbued in the person of the teacher (their personal philosophy and approach) as well as 'intentional education', the explicit curriculum set out by the teacher, the school or the education 'system' (Gosepath, 2014). Such perspectives argue that addressing inequality in education is not simply about improving pedagogy or altering the curriculum, but it must see the broader social and cultural messages communicated through a 'broken' system. At the heart of this study is a focus on educational inequality and an interest in how these conceptualisations of educational equality translate into the lived experiences of young people in schools who, as we will see below, have significantly varied educational experiences and outcomes.

3.1.2 Education and neoliberalism

Educational reforms also need to be set within a broader geopolitical context. In his book titled *Global Education Inc,* Stephen Ball suggests that philanthropy, business and governments are uniting in new ways to produce a singular vision of education which is based on the 'neoliberal imaginary' (Ball, 2012). The increasing influence of neoliberal ideas in education has been the focus of extensive empirical and theoretical studies (Dorling, 2015; Gamoran & Bruch, 2017; Reay, 2012). Neoliberalism is an economic philosophy which believes that individuals are best equipped to make their own decisions and favours free market capitalism to allocate resources and determine priorities (Madsen, 2016). However, critics suggest that as long as resources remain unequally distributed, this system will benefit some whilst disenfranchising others (Dorling, 2018).

Neoliberal imaginaries within education are manifest in a host of ways. For example, the focus on measurement, performance and league tables which has led to increasing competition between schools (d'Agnese, 2015). It has led Tomlinson to suggest that the UK educational system has moved from 'its position as a pillar of a welfare state, with a promise of free local public education, to one which supports a post-welfare society dominated by competitive markets and private enterprise' (Tomlinson, 2005; 1). This argument centres on the accusation that education has shifted the focus away from the structural causes of inequality and replaced it with the language of competition, choice and measurable success (Ball, 2017; Dorling, 2015). Particularly relevant for this study, Reay suggests that the neoliberal rhetoric around diversity minimises the focus on socio-economic class and has sanctioned an increasingly divided and segregated system (Reay, 2012). In a study examining the educational choices of white middle-class families in London, Reay et al. (2007) suggest that ethnic and racial diversity was hailed as positive only as long as it was not seen to threaten the dominant position of whiteness. Similarly, Harries (2014) contends that neoliberal political machineries seek to manage difference by deferring the responsibility of racism away from political structural arrangements. Such perspectives suggest that diversity is often advocated as central to a healthy institution, society and nation, but these ideas are founded upon ideas of appropriate exposure and balance (Harries, 2014). These debates and their significance for educational experiences are particularly

pertinent in this research which aims to understand what differentiates the experiences of migrant and minority young people.

In Scotland, the Curriculum for Excellence, introduced in 2010, has placed a greater emphasis on partnership with business and philanthropy, with a strong focus on employability. Schools and pupils are measured on narrow performance criteria ensuring school leavers achieve a 'positive destination' defined as entering education, employment or training (Scottish Government, 2018a). Some critics have suggested that neoliberal ideas have permeated the recent educational reforms and may be failing to tackle the underlying causes of inequality in the system (Brown, 2016; McCluskey, 2017). This study does not set out to review the philosophical underpinnings of the curriculum in Scotland, nor assess the extent to which it is directly influenced by neoliberal ideas (although this is a gap in the literature which requires additional attention). Instead, this research provides an original contribution by advancing knowledge of what young people understand as the purpose of education, how they come to define success and their experiences of how difference (ethnic, socio-economic and spatial) are negotiated in this process.

3.1.3 Educational success

The purpose of education and how to measure its success are closely connected. As discussed above there are many competing ideas about the function of education and therefore perhaps it is unsurprising that there is little consensus about how to measure its success. Like most education systems worldwide, educational success in the UK has traditionally been quantified through standardised testing. By the end of compulsory education, school leavers are expected to have gained a range of basic qualifications which will equip them for further study or employment. However, this approach to measuring educational success has been problematised by scholars and remains the focus of extensive educational debate (Biesta, 2009; Dweck, 2008; Priestley, Robinson & Biesta, 2012).

For example, the last two decades have seen extensive development of international comparisons of educational performance. First developed in 2000, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) was established by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These Assessments measure the performance of 15-year-old school pupils' in mathematics, science, and reading and the results are used to compare the Education Systems in over seventy countries. The OECD aims to produce comparable data with a view to enabling countries to improve their education policies and outcomes (OECD, 2009). The introduction of PISA assessment has had a large impact on educational policy and practice globally, with many countries introducing more testing as a result. Vasco d'Agnese (2015) argues that PISA and the incessant measurement of schools have added to a hegemonic educational agenda driven by reporting, recording and measuring success in narrowly defined terms. Priestley and Minty (2013) have argued for a separation of educational institutions (particularly at secondary level) and their certification function. This would enable learning to take place in schools, while other bodies would facilitate certificates for school leavers. They argue there would be less opportunity for schools to become exam factories (Priestley & Minty, 2013). Employers and Universities, however, have been reluctant to endorse a radical change in the system.

3.1.4 Post-school destinations

Another approach to measuring educational success is to focus on post-school destinations. Over the past twenty years the Higher Education sector in UK has been expanded and targets have been set by Government to increase Higher Education rates. This reinforces the idea for young people that this is socially desirable as an aspiration. However, pertinent to this study, research has shown that educational inequalities also exist within Higher Education. A recent study has shown that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds were nearly ten times less likely to gain entry to a top university (Fair Education Alliance, 2018) and the authors suggest that part of this challenge is inequality across secondary education and the lack of clarity in university admission processes. Empirical studies have

shown that exam grades do not provide a transparent and fair means of assessing aptitude creating an unfair system based on local school and wider experiences rather than on ability (Forsyth & Furlong, 2000).

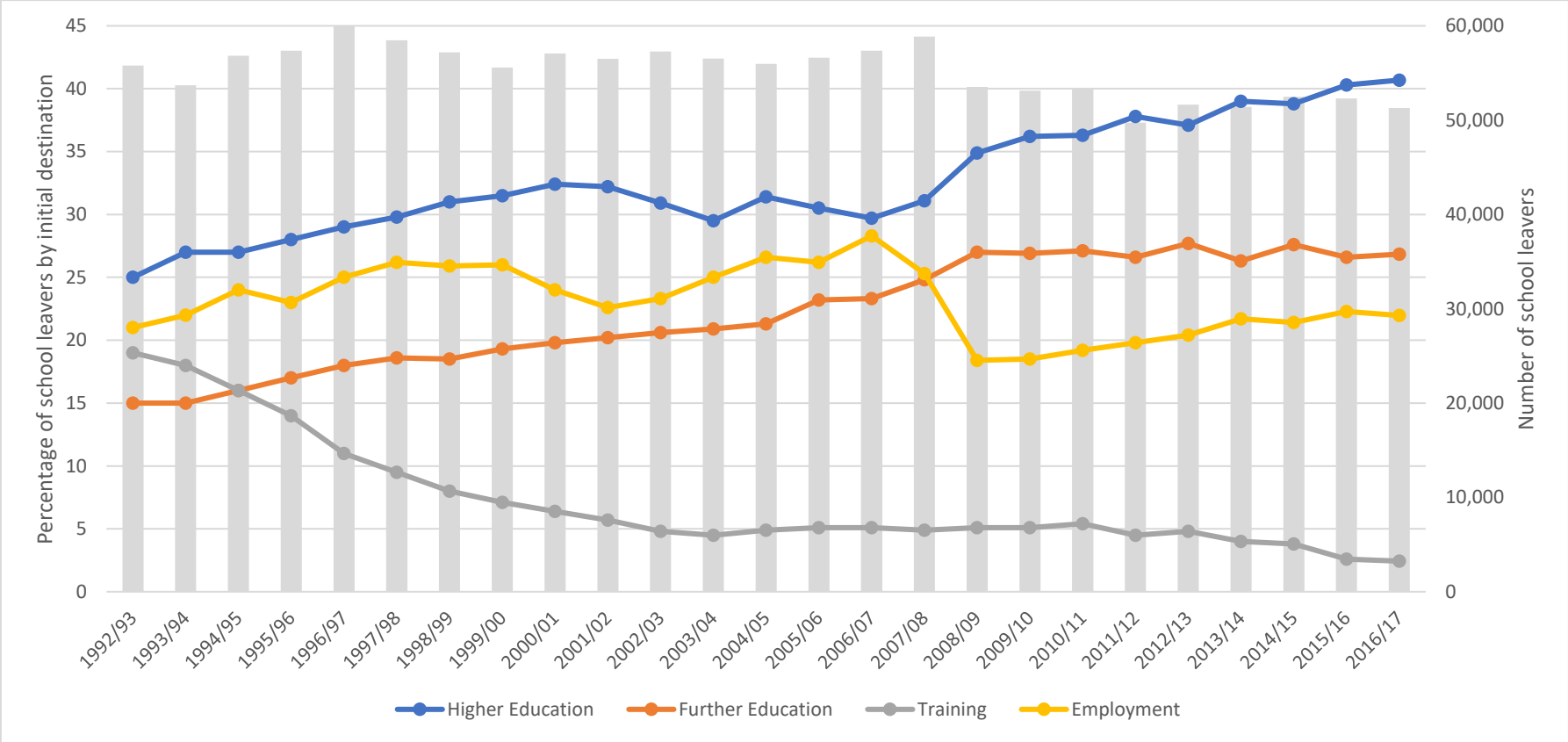
However, inequalities in Higher Education reach beyond social economic background. An emerging area of scholarship has been ethnic differences in Higher Education. A series of studies by Bolliver (2013, 2016) revealed that only 36 per cent of black and minority ethnic applicants to Russell Group universities were offered places compared to 55 per cent of White applicants between 2010 and 2012. Research by Noden et al, (2014) used quantitative analysis of applications data to find that Pakistani students would receive 7 additional rejections per 100 compared with white applicants. The research also points to evidence that some minority groups are concentrated in less prestigious institutions. Scholars argue that this inequality matters because it is likely to affect candidates' career pathways and the ability to access elite professions (Noden, 2014). These disparities are an interesting contrast to secondary education, where many ethnic minority students appear to achieve higher grades than their white British peers (Arshad et al., 2005; Strand, 2011). This research tries to uncover this paradox; it will focus on educational transitions and seeks to establish whether the experiences of educational transition in school is distinctive in some way and whether an examination of this period can deepen understanding of why ethnic inequalities may persist at Universities and the labour market.

In Scotland, there has been a shift away from focusing on Higher Education as a proxy for measuring success for all students (McKinney, McClung, Hall, Cameron, & Lowden, 2012). Instead, as described in 3.1.2 above, there has been a strong emphasis on ensuring all young people in Scottish schools achieve a 'positive destination'. The language of positive destinations is commonplace in schools with careers advisors and guidance staff reiterating the need to achieve a positive destination, defined as a post-school route which is either in employment, training or education (Scottish Government, 2018a). Despite this broader conceptualisation of success, Higher Education remains the most common destination for school leavers as can be seen by

Figure 3-1 which shows the destinations of school leavers since 1992. It highlights the steady growth in the proportion of young people leaving school and going to university (up 16 per cent in 24 years). The figure also highlights a steady rise in young people moving to Further Education (an increase of 12 per cent). The proportion of students leaving for employment fell sharply between 2006/07 and 2008/09 and has not recovered to levels before the economic crisis. Finally, the proportion of students pursuing training has fallen in Scotland over this time period with just 2 per cent going on to training in 2016/17. The bar chart shows that the number of school leavers has fluctuated over the last two decades. This variation is caused by a range of factors including patterns in the birth rate, in-migration as well as labour market conditions and new opportunities for training and further education.

The research reviewed so far has revealed that, despite its meritocratic ideals, the education system does not always facilitate social mobility for everyone. Instead, structural inequalities in society can reproduce and entrench disadvantage through the education system. The research has also shown that a neoliberal policy context has led to an increasing focus on creating an educational system which focuses on outcomes, competition and market forces. However, the literature also points to persistent inequalities, with specific barriers identified for young people from minority ethnic backgrounds and lower-income families accessing Higher Education. The next section will explore these educational inequalities in greater depth

Figure 3-1 Number of school leavers (bar chart) and percentage (line) going to four initial destinations (Higher Education, Further Education, Training and Employment) from publicly funded schools in Scotland between 1992/93-2016/17



Source: Author's analysis of School Leaver Destination data (Scottish Government, 2018a)

3.1.5 Focusing on educational transition

So far in this review of the literature, there has been an introduction to the theoretical debate on educational inequalities, examining the purpose of education, current neoliberal framings and the range of ways in which educational success is measured. This section argues that educational success should be viewed more broadly. The rising number of students attending Higher Education and the focus on 'positive destinations' have contributed to a tendency to focus exclusively on the potential economic productivity of school leavers, rather than a more holistic understandings of success. This study uses the lens of transition to redress this balance and seeks to look beyond exam results or the destination of school pupils. The term education transition will be used to capture the experiences of school leavers and sets out to improve understanding of why inequalities persist and how they are experienced.

The term 'transition' is deployed here, as other scholars have, recognising its inherently fluid, complex and fragmented nature (Bynner, 2005; Wyn & Woodman, 2006). However, the term transition continues to be useful as 'a metaphor that does not presume a particular sort of content, direction or length at the level of individual experience' (MacDonald & Marsh, 2005; 36). Transition captures a dynamic point in the life course, where life chances are often established (Schoon & Lyons-Amos, 2016). Given its significance as a nexus of opportunity and possibility, this period of transition is an ideal space in which to study the debates about inequality and diversity which have been highlighted already in this chapter and section 2.2.2 in the previous chapter.

Originally based within the field of childhood studies, but quickly reaching beyond those boundaries are the connected literatures on 'youth' and 'youth transition'. The international Journal of Youth Studies was first established in 1998 and set out to reflect the rapidly changing socio-economic circumstances which young people find themselves in. This scholarship has also had a specific focus on how these changes – social, cultural, technological, environmental and economic – generate fresh opportunities as well as new risks of marginalisation and exclusion. Within Human Geography there was also a growing focus on the geographies of

youth, marked in 1998 by the publication of *Cool Places* by Valentine and Skelton (1998) which brought together emerging research in this area to address the 'absence of young people in Geography' (Valentine & Skelton, 1998; 2). Twenty years since its publication, a number of papers have sought to assess the significance of *Cool Places* and reflect on the place of youth geography (Aitken, 2019; Kraftl & Horton, 2018; Smith & Mills, 2018). Gill Valentine, reflecting on the edited volume, suggests that despite pockets of excellent work in recent decades, the field of Youth Geography has failed to mature as a sub-discipline over this period (Valentine, 2018), which has struggled to define itself between children's geographies and scholarship focusing on adults. However, Valentine contends that recent global events may ignite new life into youth geographies and shift its focus towards understanding contemporary structural problems as generational inequalities and giving a voice to the agency of young people. This study of educational transitions is situated within this context and sets its understanding of youth transition within the geographical perspectives.

Successful transition

If transition enables more than the measurement of outcomes, such as exam results and destinations, then is legitimate to ask what a positive or good transition is. McDowell suggests that successful transitions have classically been viewed in three areas, 'moving from school to education, training or work; moving from domestic dependence on parents to the establishment of an adult independent familial relationship and finally a housing transition from the parental home to independent living' (McDowell, 2002; 54). This has been complicated and is increasingly rejected as the standard template for transition. Hurrelmann and Quenzel (2015) explain these roles can be assumed much earlier and are not seen as essential. Linear pathways, scholars have argued, ignore other important aspects of becoming an adult, including sexuality, health and disability, drugs, crime and involvement in the criminal justice system, as well as important questions about citizenship and community participation (Côté & Levine, 2015; McDowell, 2002). Other scholars have reflected on successful transition in the twenty-first century. For example, 'transitions that provide a progressive increase in developmentally appropriate challenges through which young people can

experience competence enable the individual to successfully master the transition' (Schoon & Lyons-Amos, 2016; 127). This fuller definition seeks to reflect that there should be a more flexible understanding of diverse pathways.

An area of contention in the literature has been the agency which individual school leavers have in fulfilling their aspirations and pursuing a particular educational transition. According to Helve and Evans, the extent to which transition is about structure or agency remains unresolved (Helve & Evans, 2013). The agency-structure debate revolves around the extent to which healthy transition is about individual choices or a reflection of the individual position in the social structure. Côté (2014) suggests that young people possess both structural resources (through parental affluence and social networks) and personal/agentic resources (including cognitive and non-cognitive abilities). He concludes that where structural resources are low, experience of transition is likely to be more uncertain and subject to higher risks, even where personal/agentic resources are high. Whilst this research acknowledges Helve and Evans' (2013) assertion that 'the relevance of personal resources in relation to structural obstacles is one of the biggest points of contention in this area of research' (Helve & Evans, 2013; 309) it also seeks to move beyond looking at agency and structure as a simple binary. Drawing on Schoon and Lyons-Amos (2016), this study sets out to avoid this dualism and assess how transitions are shaped by interactions between structure and agency. Both structure and agency variables are associated with variations in transitions, therefore this research seeks to develop understandings of the processes which underpin these varied pathways. Much of the literature on youth transitions has been founded on quantitative studies examining large scale longitudinal datasets; these datasets have provided robust empirical evidence and traced changes over time. This has led some scholars to call for more research into the everyday experiences, motivations and aspirations of young people in the transition to adulthood (Valentine, 2003). In this thesis, longitudinal qualitative research will be used alongside the large administrative datasets in an effort to introduce a more holistic perspective of youth transitions. By paying particular attention to the narratives of young people it contributes to scholarship on youth transition at a time when generational inequalities are deepening, and the geopolitical landscape is changing rapidly.

3.2 Evidence of educational inequalities

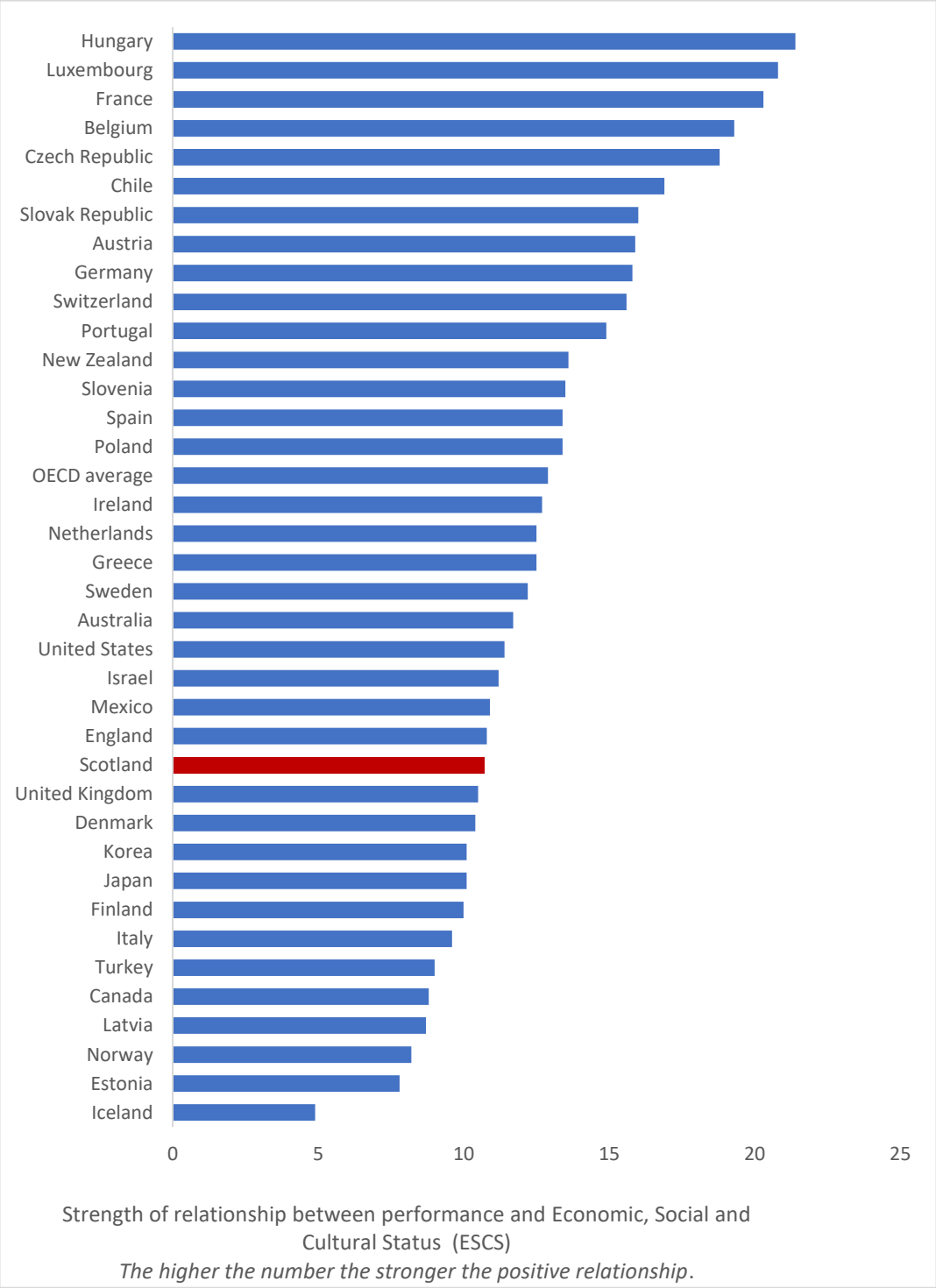
So far, this chapter has examined the roots of educational philosophy and practice in the UK. It has examined the philosophical foundations of education, observed its current neoliberal framing and problematised the concept of educational success. Next, this chapter reviews the evidence of inequalities drawing on administrative data on educational outcomes. Following this presentation of the evidence, the explanations for these inequalities will be discussed.

3.2.1 The international context

Educational inequalities are not a Scottish phenomenon. One international comparator is the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Figure 3-2 below shows the relationship between student performance and family background in 37 OECD countries. The index is constructed using responses provided by students about their parental education and occupation, learning resources in the home and cultural possessions. The index reveals the amount that the average score changes with social background - a lower score implies less change as background changes. This index is not comparable to the measure commonly used in Scotland – the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) – however, it is generated directly from information provided by the student on their own background, rather than being based on their home address, so avoids issues of more affluent students being resident in areas which are disadvantaged, and vice versa. It is also consistent across all countries who participate in PISA, enabling comparable analysis. The findings show that there is a strong relationship between educational performance and social background. The link in Scotland's performance was similar to the rest of the UK and above the OECD average, there was still a clear link between background and performance. Analysis of the Scottish results by the Scottish Government suggests that 'this gap could imply as much as three years' difference in learning achievement'. (Scottish Government, 2016c; 24).

As discussed earlier in this chapter, education is viewed as a key mechanism for encouraging upward social mobility, defined as the movement of individuals to a higher socio-economic class in society. This can be measured in numerous ways, however, Figure 3-3 records the transmission of advantage from one generation to the next. The figure shows, that the UK, along with the US and Italy, has a relatively low level of earnings mobility, meaning that there is a strong relationship between the economic position of the parents in the earnings distribution and that of their children. By contrast, intergenerational mobility is a lot higher in the Nordic countries, Canada and Australia, indicating a relatively weak relationship between the economic status of parents and that of their children. These findings emerge from a recent report on the Intergenerational transmission of disadvantage in the UK. Serafino and Tonkin (2014) found that educational attainment has the largest impact on the likelihood of being in poverty and severely materially deprived as an adult, both in the UK and the other EU countries studied. They suggest that 'holding all else equal, in the UK, those with a low level of educational attainment are almost five times as likely to be in poverty now and 11 times as likely to be severely materially deprived as those with a high level of education' (Serafino & Tonkin, 2014; 12).

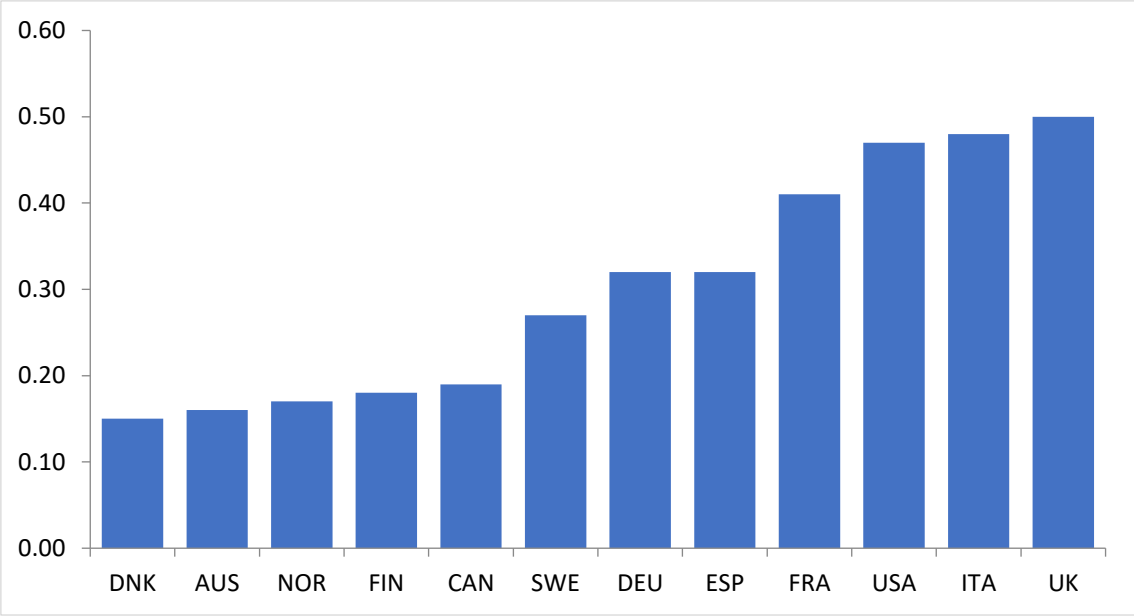
Figure 3-2 Relationship between student performance and Economic, Social and Cultural Status (ESCS) using the 2015 PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) Index across OECD countries and UK administrations.



Source: Author's analysis of 2015 PISA results for Scotland (Scottish Government, 2016c)

Notes: Based on Relationship between student performance in science and the PISA Index of Economic, Social and Cultural Status (ESCS) and immigration background: OECD and UK administrations, 2015

Figure 3-3 Intergenerational earnings elasticity across twelve countries (the relationship between the earnings of parents and their children).



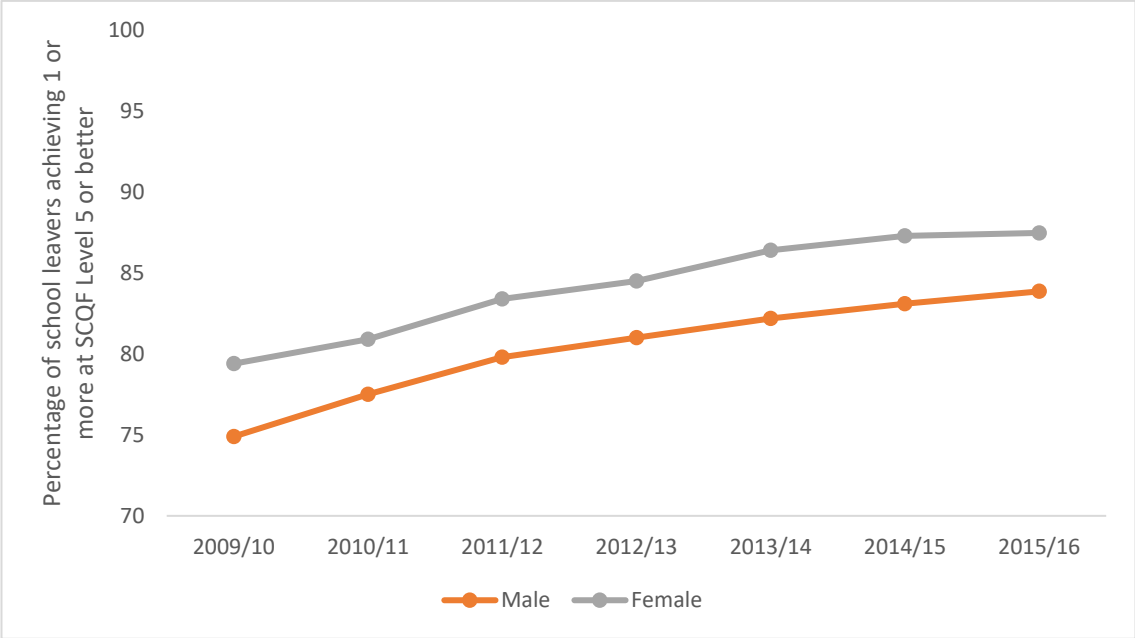
Source: (Figure 1 from Serafino & Tonkin, 2014; 2)

Notes: Intergenerational earnings elasticity relates the earnings of parents to that of their children. A high value indicates high persistence of earnings across generations and therefore low intergenerational mobility.

3.2.2 The national context

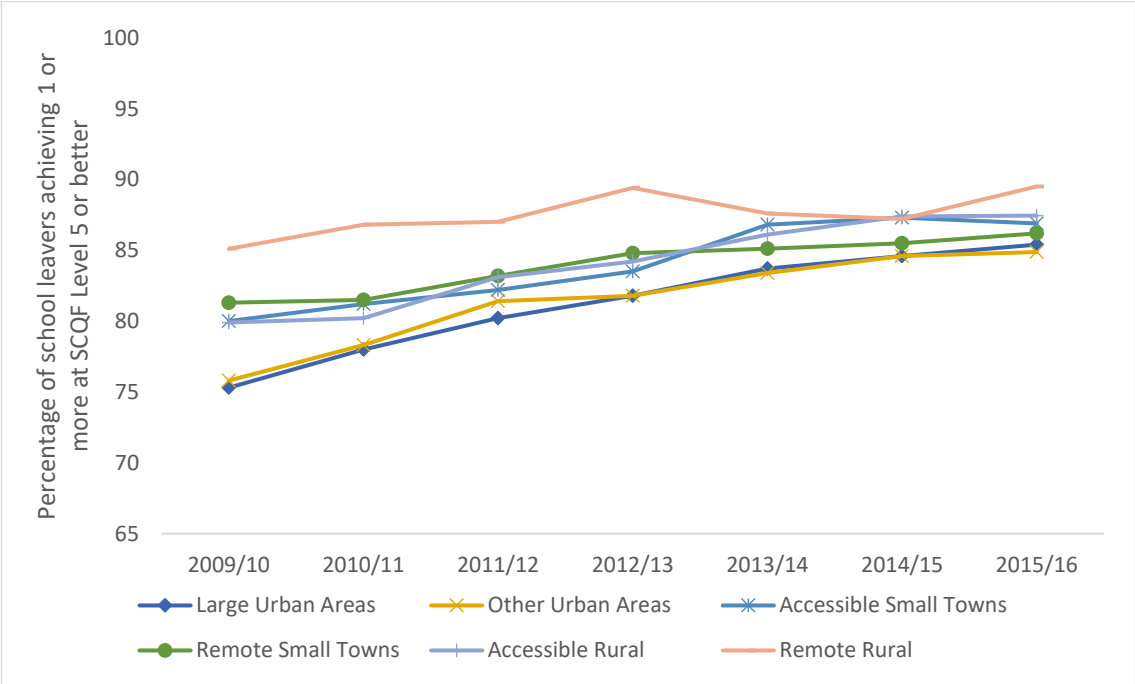
The next few figures focus on educational attainment by pupil characteristics (gender, geographic location, deprivation and ethnicity). Further details of the Scottish education system can be found in the Appendix. However, the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is a tool for comparing Scottish Qualifications, which are graded from 1 (most basic) to 12 (doctoral degree). Level 5 qualifications are usually undertaken at 16 and equate to a Standard Grade or GCSE pass. Figure 3-4 shows that girls are continuing to outperform boys, a trend which has been consistent over time. The explanations for these differences will be discussed in 3.3.1 below.

Figure 3-4 Percentage of school leavers gaining one or more SCQF Level 5 or better by gender



Source: Author's representation of gender and qualification level from Table 6 of Attainment and Leavers Destinations (Scottish Government, 2018a; 14)

Figure 3-5 Percentage of school leavers gaining one or more SCQF Level 5 or better by a six-fold measure of geography



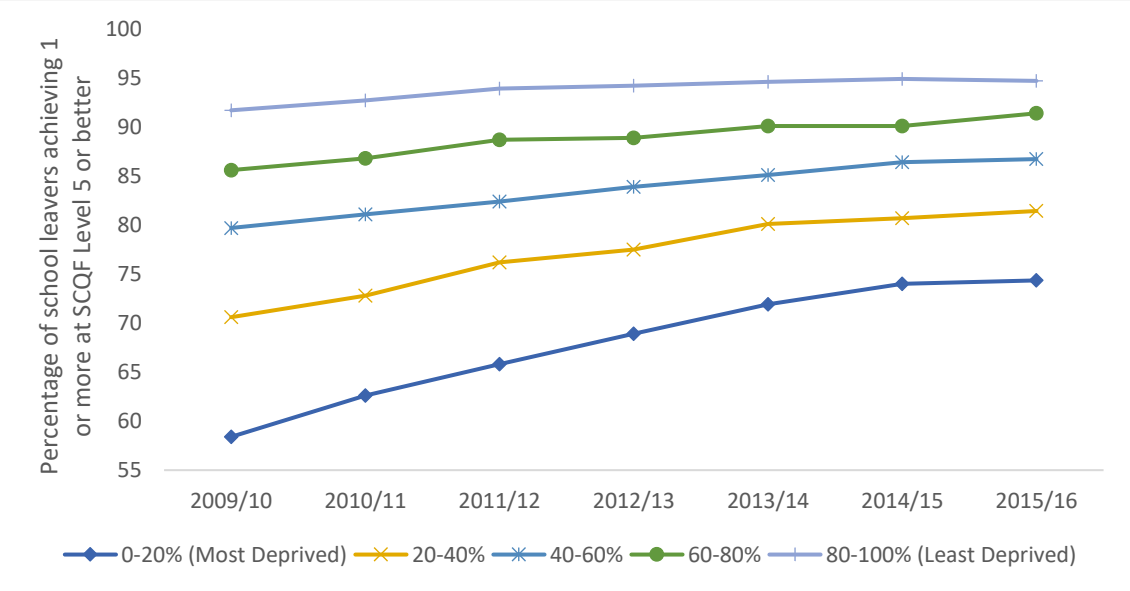
Note: The six-fold measure of geography uses the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification breakdowns, available at https://statistics.gov.scot/data/urban-rural-classification

Source: Author's representation of geography and qualification level from Table 6 of Attainment and Leavers Destinations (Scottish Government, 2018a; 14)

Figure 3-5 reveals the attainment of school leavers across geographic locations. It reveals that 90 per cent of school leavers from remote rural locations achieved one or more pass at SCQF Level 5 in 2016/7. It highlights that using the current standard markers of success (exam results), there are no significant differences in outcomes by geography. However, this will be explored in greater depth through the study.

Figure 3-6 below reveals the stark difference between school leavers from the most and least deprived backgrounds. Although the gap between these two groups has narrowed over time, there remains a 20 per cent difference. This connects with the sharp differences highlighted through the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation in the previous chapter (see Figure 2-2).

Figure 3-6 Percentage of school leavers gaining one or more SCQF Level 5 or better by level of deprivation, quintiles from Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016



Source: Author's representation of SIMD and qualification level from Table 6 of Attainment and Leavers Destinations (Scottish Government, 2018a; 14) Note: Based on SIMD 2012 for 2015/16 and SIMD 2016 for 2016/17. See http://simd.scot/2016/

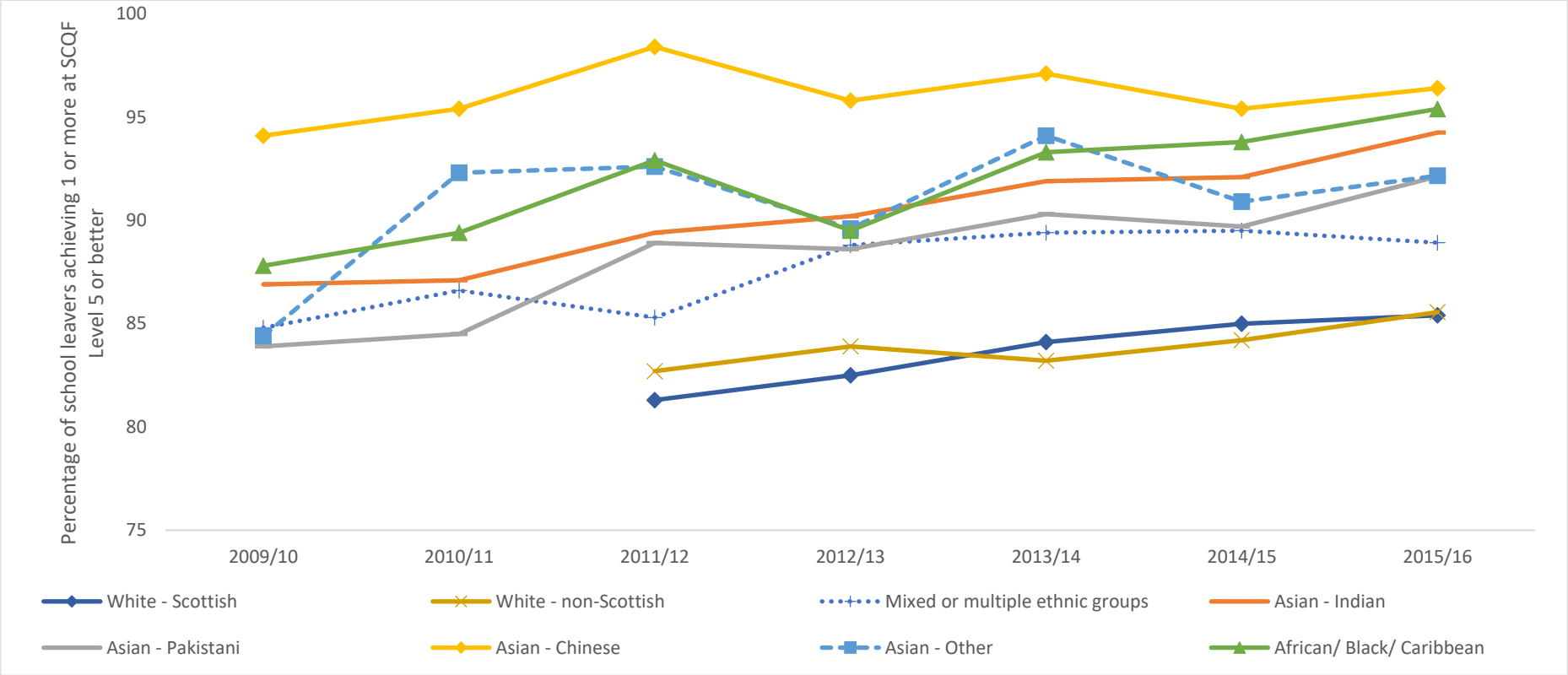
Finally, Figure 3-7 presents ethnic differences in school attainment. It shows that Asian Chinese continue to have the highest levels of achievement, with 94.1 per cent achieving 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 5 or better in 2016/17. White Scottish and White Other students perform the least well of all ethnic groups, with around 85 per cent of school leavers achieving these standards. There is a bourgeoning field of research on the academic performance of majority White Scottish students (Baldwin, 2012; Bressey & Dwyer, 2008; Reay et al., 2007; Rhodes, 2013).

Empirical research has shown that White British students (particularly boys) have lower attainment than their minority ethnic peers. Research on this will be reviewed in more detail below. Yet, in this research into inequalities across the life course, questions remain around why, despite these overall trends, long term outcomes for White British adults exceed those of all minority ethnic groups. Ethnic inequalities in Higher Education (Boliver, 2013, 2016) in the labour market (Jivraj & Simpson, 2015; Simpson et al., 2006) and health (Nazroo, 2003) persist. As a result, this research which responds to a call to examine class alongside ethnicity. Rhodes (2013) argues that ethnicity or class should not be locked in a struggle for legitimacy but should be examined together. This study adds to this body of work, examining the intersections between ethnicity and social class. Although this research does not focus on White Scottish/British boys specifically, these groups are not excluded from the analysis. The qualitative research design (see Chapter 4) includes White Scottish and non-White Scottish students and school leavers from all ethnic backgrounds will be included in the quantitative analysis.

Research on the educational performance of students in England and Wales by ethnicity reveal that broadly speaking, educational achievement of Black Caribbean, Black African, Black Other, Pakistani and Bangladeshi students is lower than those of their White British peers, whist the attainment of Chinese, Indian and Irish students is higher than the mean of their White British peers (Hills, 2010; Shah, Dwyer & Modood, 2010; Strand, 2008). As discussed in the previous chapter (section 2.3), the size and composition of ethnic groups in Scotland are distinctive. The trends in academic performance are also different from the trends in England and Wales as illustrated in Figure 3-7 where all ethnic groups (apart from White Other) are outperforming White Scottish. However, there has been very little comparative research carried out in the Scottish context. The few studies which do exist suggest that children from some minority ethnic backgrounds are outperforming the majority population in schools, even in deprived areas (Netto, Sosenko & Bramley, 2011). Other work has pointed to the evidence that minority ethnic young people in Scotland appear to be over-represented in further education and under-represented in higher education (Scottish Government, 2016b). However, this variability continues to raise questions of why some ethnic groups appear to do better than others. Moreover, there has been no research on the educational transitions of minority ethnic young people. Without further research

within the changing cultural and demographic context in Scotland, the outcomes of young people will remain misunderstood and liable for misinterpretation.

Figure 3-7 Percentage of school leavers gaining one or more SCQF Level 5 or better by ethnic group



Source: Author's representation of ethnicity and qualification level from Table 6 of Attainment and Leavers Destinations (Scottish Government, 2018a; 14)

Note: The categories used to collect ethnicity and national identity data changed in the 2011 pupil census to agree with the categories used in the main population census. This means they are not directly comparable with information collected in previous years and 'White – UK' and 'White – Other' could not be calculated for more recent years so are represented by N/A, and 'White-Scottish' and 'White-non-Scottish' could not be calculated for 2009/10 and 2010/11. Some categories have been grouped together due to small numbers. Some categories contain between 100-200 leavers.

3.3 Explaining educational inequalities

The previous section outlined the main areas of educational inequality in Scotland. These trends, however, are not unique to Scotland and scholars have explored and sought to explain the many reasons for the differences in educational attainment. This section draws together six common explanations for these differential outcomes which have been identified following a comprehensive review of the literature. The six key explanations for educational inequalities are summarised as demographic explanations, economic explanations, cultural explanations, social capital explanations, discriminatory practices and place-based accounts. These explanations will be discussed in turn with reference to differences by social class, ethnicity and geography which form the basis of this study.

These six explanations have been selected as distinctive, yet there are many overlaps and connections between them, capturing the key themes which emerge in the scholarship reviewed for this thesis. The explanations have been derived from a large body of work in fields including education, psychology, sociology, human geography, social policy and economics. For the purposes of this thesis, based in the School of Geography and Sustainable Development, the majority of examples are drawn from the geographic literature and where pertinent, studies from other disciplines are reviewed, too.

3.3.1 Demographic explanations

This broad category captures the literature which has focused primarily on the demographic profile of a student to explain differential outcomes. Here, demographic explanations are defined as distinct from economic or cultural explanations because they have focussed on (largely) fixed characteristics such as gender or the age of a school leaver. These studies are often characterised by quantitative analysis where demographic variables can be used to assess the significance of these differences. This categorisation is not rigid and closely

connects with other explanations, however, for simplicity, these studies are considered together.

Gender

There is a large body of work which explores gender gaps in educational attainment. Although this is not the primary focus of this thesis, the differences highlighted above are significant and therefore understanding gender inequalities is an important context in this research. Research by Figlio et al. (2016) revealed that this a global phenomenon, with a higher proportion of females than males graduating in 29 of the 34 OECD countries in 2011 (Figlio, Karbownik, Roth, & Wasserman, 2016). Explanations for these differences in schools have explored whether boys and girls learn differently (Torppa, Eklund, Sulkunen, Niemi, & Ahonen, 2018), whether they respond to different forms of assessment (UNICEF, 2018) or can be shaped differently by their peer networks (Schoon & Eccles, 2014). Despite extensive analysis of international comparative data, gender differences remained largely unexplained.

Schoon and Eccles (2014) examined the role of peers in influencing gendered careers aspirations. They highlight that, from a young age, peer groups are often segregated by gender and this can play an important role in shaping education outcomes and aspirations. Their research found that single-sex educational contexts can exacerbate these trends, because there is less exposure to peers of other genders and the salience of gender is heightened. Recent work on the gender gap in Scotland has noted that not all boys are falling behind, the gap is most significant for academically able boys (Corry, 2017). Using in-depth interviews with pupils in secondary schools in Scotland, Corry found that essentialist constructions of gender, along gender stereotypical lines, were hindering learner success and attainment.

Level of English

Another important consideration linked to the demographic profile of a pupil, which will be relevant to this study, is 'Level of English' competency. If English is a second

(or additional) language, academic attainment may be adversely affected (Dwyer, 2000; Esser, 2006; Kalter & Kogan, 2006). Esser (2006) suggests that the older the child is at migration and the lower the level of parental education, the greater the barriers to educational achievement. Learning which takes place in a classroom with a higher proportion of students who do not speak the national language can reinforce this disadvantage and lead to significantly lower levels of competence in English and consequently academic achievement. In contrast, some scholars in linguistics have suggested that multilingual learners can experience advantages in education, with a higher capacity for linguistic problem solving and the added confidence that being able to speak additional languages can bring. It is agreed that these benefits are usually only accrued once competency in the new language has reached a particular threshold (King & Fogle, 2006; McGroarty, 1998).

Age of School Leaver

The age of school leavers is described here as a demographic identifier. Historically, there is an inverse relationship between the age of a school leaver and labour market outcomes (Patiniotis & Holdsworth, 2005)**.** Remaining in post-16 school education is linked to higher wages, an increased likelihood of labour force participation, higher educational outcomes, more post-compulsory participation, increased likelihood of civic involvement, health benefits, increased life satisfaction and a reduction in offending behaviour and crime. (Spielhofer, Walker, Gagg, Schagen, & O'Donnell, 2007). Similar research has led the education systems across the UK to raise the age of compulsory education and encourage as many pupils as possible to stay on to the age of 18. This approach has been critiqued by some who recognise that school is not the best place for all young people, with some preferring the flexibility and specialism of a further education setting. In a recent paper, Sukarieh and Tannock (2017) have argued that education can sometimes bring a penalty. They suggest that for some school leavers moving into entry-level jobs, education can serve as a penalty rather than a premium, with education being used to diminish workers' rights and conditions of employment. This study will consider the age of school leaver as a variable in the analysis because it does have a significant bearing on where someone is able to progress

to after school. Extensive research into the effects of young people not in education, employment and training, sometimes called NEETs, have found that the impact of this period can be long-lasting. In Scottish research, Ralston et al. (2016) found that the scarring effect of being NEET can also have long term implications for health outcomes, as well as increasing the likelihood of a custodial prison sentence.

3.3.2 Economic explanations

Having considered demographic explanations of educational inequality, the next body of literature which seeks to explain attainment differences is that which focuses on material wealth or economic differences. The literature on educational attainment due to socio-economic differences is vast. This has been the focus of studies, across a range of disciplines, for decades. The links between poverty, deprivation and educational attainment are evident in the figures above. However, for this study, it will be important to understand the complex ways economic explanations for differences in attainment intersect with other characteristics, such as geographic or migrant background.

Research has consistently demonstrated the significant attainment differences between young people from higher and lower-income households with many explanations given for these differences. Despite a free state education system in the UK, empirical work has revealed the many hidden costs of schooling; including the cost of uniforms, transport as well as in and out-of-school activities which may be beneficial to learning (Barnard, 2017; Child Poverty Action Group, 2016). Parents living in poverty may also feel intimidated or wary of participating in their child's education, especially if they did not have a positive experience of school themselves (Cebolla-Boado et al., 2016; Riddell, 2009). Other studies have focused on the cost/benefit trade-off for some families who are more likely to leave school and go to work than remain in full time education. A series of targeted government interventions have sought to overcome these practical barriers to education for low income families. However, access to clothing vouchers (for uniforms), free school meals and the educational maintenance allowance (for low income pupils at risk of dropping out of school at 16) can be stigmatised and uptake

does not reflect the real need (Scottish Government, 2016b; Sosu & Ellis, 2014). In the context of this study, poverty research into migrant and minority groups has found that uptake may be even lower in these groups due to a lack of knowledge of schemes, intimidating paperwork for non-English speakers or a reluctance to admit help is needed. In a review of ethnicity and poverty in Scotland, Kelly (2016) explains that poverty is higher among ethnic minority groups than within the majority white population, but there is variation between groups and geographical areas. She also highlights that despite the overlap between the equalities and poverty agendas, there has been a lack of integration between them.

Narrowing the focus to exploring the difference poverty can make to young people from a migrant background, a review of the changing nature of inequalities in the UK showed that the experiences of different ethnic groups have varied considerably since the start of the economic crisis (Hills, Cunliffe, Obolenskaya, & Karagiannaki, 2015). There is not a simple message which says that some groups have done uniformly better than others. There is variation within as well as between ethnic and migrant groups, as well as by age, gender and disability. In the report, Hills et al. (2015) show that the level of qualifications of the non-White groups of working age has improved even faster than that of those identifying as White. However, net incomes remain higher for white adults than for other groups before and after housing costs. Many studies have concluded that socio-economic factors, such as household income, are the main reason for ethnic differences in educational attainment (Dollmann, 2017; Hwang & Domina, 2016). For example, Krause, Rinne and Schüller (2015) conducted research into second-generation migrants and native children in Germany to assess the determinants of differences in educational outcomes. In particular, they explored whether migrant and non-migrant children shared the same socio-economic family background would there still be differences in educational outcomes. They found that the native–migrant education gap at the age of 17 years could be entirely explained by differences in socio-economic family background.

In contrast, other scholars have warned of the limits of using only socio-economic reasons to explain ethnic gaps in educational attainment (Heizmann & Böhnke, 2016; Strand, 2011). For example, Strand (2011) examines the educational attainment and progress between age 11 and age 14 of over 14,500 students through analysis of the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England. Findings

showed that the attainment gap in national tests at age 14 between White British and several ethnic minority groups was large, more than three times the size of the gender gap, but at the same time only about one-third of the size of the social class gap. Socio-economic variables could account for the attainment gaps for Black African, Pakistani and Bangladeshi students, but not for Black Caribbean students. The economic explanation alone was not sufficient to explain the differences. In the paper, Strand (2011) goes on to added further controls, beyond simply economic indicators, such as parental and student attitudes, expectations and behaviours. These additional variables indicated that minority ethnic groups were often more advantaged on these measures than White British students, but significantly the study found that this was not reflected proportionately in their levels of attainment (Strand, 2011). This paper demonstrates the value of large-scale longitudinal studies, which can be used to examine the complexity of the attainment gap. It also supports a broader conceptualisation of the reasons for ethnic differences in attainment which combine economic factors with an understanding of attitudes, expectations and behaviour. The literature above builds the case for developing a methodology in this thesis which recognises the multifaceted causes of educational inequalities and combines economic explanations with social and cultural reasons for educational disparities.

3.3.3 Cultural explanations

As well as demographic and economic explanations for differential outcomes in education, there has also been an emphasis on cultural explanations. As discussed above, understanding attitudes, expectations and behaviour are important when examining the ethnic differences in academic outcomes. Research which focuses on the children of migrants has often been attentive to the differences in parental knowledge of the education system, which may in turn influence the ability of parents to help with school work. In this thesis, which will examine multiple axes of difference, cultural differences may also be also relevant for White British students from different social classes. For example, for those whose parents did not have a positive experience at school. Studies on cultural attachment to education tend to focus on parental skills in helping children with

their school work, providing extra-curricular activities which may support learning and knowledge about how to navigate the educational system. In quantitative studies, these are frequently indexed by variables about level of parental education.

In their introduction to a special issue on ethnic differences in educational attainment, Heath and Brinbaum (2007) discuss the cultural explanations and suggest that these traditional explanations which emphasise social background are vital in explaining the educational differences between minority groups. They suggest that the models and measures of social reproduction from the sociology literature are effective explanations for ethnic minority disadvantage, including explaining the educational disadvantages of the children of migrants of European ancestry (Heath & Brinbaum, 2007). The authors of this special issue demonstrate that parental socio-economic status appears to stratify ethnic minorities in much the same way that it stratifies majority groups and appears to have very similar consequences for educational attainment. In the decade since this special issue, there has been new research on this issue, focusing on three main themes which are explored in turn below.

The value of education

There has been a body of literature examining the value placed on education in low socio-economic groups such as new migrants. For example, in their recent paper, Hadjar and Scharf (2018) explore whether young migrants assign a higher value to education than their non-immigrant peers and whether this perspective on the importance of education translates into higher educational aspirations. The study is based on analysis of the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey in four European countries (Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands and England). They tested three hypotheses, the discouragement thesis which proposes that perception of institutional discrimination will lower the value immigrants assign to education. The second hypothesis was the *need-for-education thesis*, which suggests that education is essential for immigrants' integration (Esser, 2006) and therefore the value of education will be even higher for immigrants as it is perceived as a means of 'fitting in'. Finally, they examined the link between the value assigned to education and educational aspirations. They theorise that the higher

immigrants and non-immigrants value education, the higher their educational aspirations. Hadjar and Scharf (2018) found that immigrants did attach a higher value to education than non-migrants (first hypothesis). Secondly, when testing whether immigrants felt they 'needed education' (to fit in, to integrate, to avoid discrimination), the results were different in different contexts. The Netherlands shows the highest gap in the value of education between immigrants and non-immigrants – significantly differing from Germany and England. The authors suggest this could reflect the difference in the institutional setting, where there is less of a focus on immigrant integration in the Netherlands, at least compared to Sweden and England. Finally, the third hypothesis proposed that the higher the value of education, the more realistic educational aspirations will become. The findings showed that ambitious aspirations were closely connected with the value placed on education.

Commitment to family

A number of studies have sought to understand the impact of family culture on the outcomes and aspirations of the children of migrants. In the US, the concept of 'familism' defined broadly as prioritising one's family over oneself has been the focus of numerous studies. Schwartz (2007) found that collectivist thinking or a greater level of interdependence is also evident across a range of ethnic groups, beyond the Hispanic community which it has been historically associated with. Recent research by Fuligni and Tseng (2017) compared the attitudes of 800 adolescents from different ethnic backgrounds, looking specifically at the role of family culture on a range of outcomes, including aspirations and academic attainment. The authors set out to assess the family obligations of American teenagers with Asian, Latin American and European backgrounds. Extensive analysis showed an acute awareness of the sacrifices of their parents and a greater commitment to familism among young people from minority ethnic backgrounds. The study found that rather than restricting a young person's ability to settle into a culture which emphases individualism, 'remembering one's obligation to the family may serve as a critical component in the evolving identities of Asian and Latin American youths' (Fuligni, Tseng & Lam, 1999; 1043). The studies above have underlined that experiences of transition may be differentiated

in terms of migrant identity. However, they have also revealed the lack of studies which focus on migrant identity through educational transition.

Cultural capital and experiences of transition

Finally, in addition to the shaping of influence of family culture and educational value, a number of studies have also focussed on the differentiated transition experiences of young people with migrant backgrounds. Research in the Scottish context by scholars such as Moskal, Sime and Tyrrell have been an invaluable platform for this research (Moskal, 2014, 2015, 2016; Moskal & Tyrrell, 2015; Sime, Fassetta & McClung, 2018; Sime & Fox, 2014; Tyrrell, Sime, Kelly, & McMellon, 2018).

In her study on conflicted identity and family capital, Moskal (2014) explores the concept of family capital for young Poles in Scottish schools. The research examined the experiences of young people aged between 12 and 17, highlighting the effects of transition to a new school, culture, language, social and family change post-migration. The sample included participants from urban, semi-urban and rural locations and included young people and their parents. Moskal (2014) found that the acquisition of social and cultural capital was critical in helping young migrants adapt and feel settled. Many young Polish migrants drew on the cultural capital derived from the educational practices in their home country, placing them in more advantaged positions than their White Scottish peers. The study highlights the agency of many migrant young people and the complex ways migrant experience is used to enable integration and overcome perceived disadvantages (such as limited English language or knowledge of the education system). Moskal reiterates the agency of pupils and suggests that schools frequently overlook the linguistic, cultural and intellectual resources which migrant youth bring. Although she does not focus on school leavers specifically, the author concludes by highlighting the need for further longitudinal research which traces first-generation migrants as they experience transition to adulthood (Moskal, 2014). This follows earlier recommendations in a Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) report on ethnicity in Scotland, which called for research which 'traces the educational patterns of young people moving from secondary school to further and higher education' (Netto et al., 2011; 7).

The importance of cultural capital was also a key theme in a recent paper on attitudes to education post-migration (Sime et al., 2018). Sime et al. explore the cultural capital of Roma families in Govanhill, Glasgow. The findings draw on in-depth interviews with parents and children from Slovak and Romanian backgrounds. While Roma mothers recognised the value of education for social mobility, they remained aware of the limited resources they could draw upon, in the absence of desirable economic and cultural capitals, and as a result of their ethnicity, social class, gender and undesirable migrant status. Crucially, the study found that there was a sense of scepticism, even hopelessness, among parents that their (Roma) children would not overcome their marginalization through education. These studies, in Scotland, highlight the potential ways social class and migration history may intersect with one another to enhance or mitigate their effects. They highlight the importance of educational practices in their home countries and the role which schools can play in acknowledging the cultural and intellectual resources which young migrants possess. This literature also reveals the isolation and lack of confidence which restricts the possibility of education helping to overcome marginalisation (Sime et al., 2018).

The literature reviewed in this section has established the need for undertaking research which attends to the complex cultural drivers of educational inequality and focuses not simply on educational outcomes, but also differentiated experiences of transition. This theme of experiences of transition is revisited in the next section which reviews the literature on social capital and social class explanations of educational inequality.

3.3.4 Social capital and class explanations

This section on social class is closely connected to the paragraphs above which have focused on cultural capital. In some ways, the division is artificial, however, they are reviewed apart to reflect the focus on social class as a distinct axis of difference in this thesis.

There have been some examples of research into the class-based experiences of young people in transition. Although now over fifteen years ago, an innovative

study by Linda McDowell into the transitions of white working-class school leavers provides an important example of an innovative methodological approach. The study used repeat interviews (three) with school leavers over a 12-15-month period with White working-class males. The research took place in Cambridge and Sheffield within deprived urban communities and sought to explore the 'life-world' of the participants. McDowell found that low-achieving school leavers did not fulfil the stereotypes which so often burdened them, nor was there a sense of crisis around their masculinity. Aspirations, she argues, were typified by one participant, 'I want to settle down with a good job, a nice house and a family' (McDowell, 2002; 55). This vision of white working-class transition and masculinity contradicted many of the tropes of disaffected school leavers. The study observed that their possibility of realising these aims was less certain, due to the types of jobs they have entered which show little promise of progression and career development. The longitudinal qualitative approaches used in this research were key to building trust with participants and exposing the shaping influence of class and gender in marginalised communities (a theme developed in the final chapter).

In a more recent study which examines transition and identity in Hong Kong, Choi (2017) suggests that educational transitions are inherently classed processes. Empirical work used the autobiographical reflections of final year students who were invited to reflect on their experiences and formulate personal histories. The study found that schools played a significant role in how young people experience transition and develop identity. Choi found less affluent students traded on the capital gained from going to 'a good school' and used this symbolic capital to offset any material or cultural deprivation which they experienced at home. These participants also relied on achieving good grades or being in the higher sets at school to acquire social capital and depended heavily on support from teachers.

This Bourdierian analysis which considers symbolic capital and the importance of power when considering class is an important consideration for this thesis. Choi (2017) also found that linguistic capital played a crucial role in hindering access to Higher Education for families with limited educational background. He concludes by suggesting further research is needed into the role of social class and cultural practices in promoting social justice, an area which this thesis focuses on.

Another relevant study within the geographical literature is research on the role of social class, transition and migrant identity in the global south (Punch, 2015). Punch used multi-sited, longitudinal research in Bolivia to assess youth transitions and migrant trajectories. This research found that pathways can be relatively spontaneous and dynamic rather than carefully planned. Young people often reacted to opportunities which emerged through social networks, developing new relationships and maintaining old ones. Punch found that there were negotiated and constrained interdependencies within and across generations which shaped the nature of youth transitions. Although the context, in rural Bolivia, is distinct from the geographical context of this research, the study provides several substantive and methodological pointers for this thesis. For example, the finding that relationships have a key role in enabling and constraining youth transitions and secondly the methodological approach which used multi-sited and longitudinal qualitative approaches to provide rich insights to the dynamic period of transition.

Another significant aspect of social capital in the literature the importance of social networks. These social networks have been shown to develop resilience during transition, through the support of family members, teachers and peer groups. Putnam advanced the theory of 'bridging' and 'bonding' capital, two forms of social capital. The first establishes same-ethnic friendship bonds, and the second develops cross-ethnic friendship bonds (Putnam, 2001). He argues that creating cohesive, diverse multi-ethnic communities it is important to possess bridging capital. I wonder how transition affects peoples ability to form these bonds. See Reynolds (2007) work. Drawing on Putnam's work, Reynolds (2007) examines the role of friendship networks among Caribbean young people in Britain. Her study identifies how bonding and bridging capital are deployed during transition (to secondary school and university). The study demonstrated the importance of parental influence on friendship choices in the transition to adulthood, particularly for young people from migrant and minority backgrounds. Reynolds suggests that this phase in the life course can be particularly important in developing 'race consciousness' (ibid; 395) and thinking about ethnic and racial identity. The research findings show that many young people tended to have same-ethnic friendships by the time they started secondary school providing mutual support and shared understanding concerning issues of racial discrimination and social exclusion. More recently, Sime and Fox (2014) have examined the role of social capital in migrant children's access to services. They found bonding social

networks particularly important to supporting migrant children, especially the supportive role of friendship networks with children from the same country. These friendships were often developed in order to mitigate the impact of migration on their lives, demonstrating their agency and the importance of focusing on the experiences of young people themselves.

As well as the importance of peer networks, the literature also discusses the influence of wider social networks. Drawing on novel longitudinal qualitative research, Nowicka and Krzyżowski (2017) examine the social distance of Poles to other minorities in four European cities. Social distance is measured by social encounters with friends, classmates, teachers, doctors, nurses, dentists and other professionals from the same ethnic group (White Polish). Findings reveal that the size of ethnic social network varied by socio-demographic characteristics however education and occupation had less of an effect. The study also revealed spatial differences across the four cities indicate that regional and local contexts were also significant. This research on social networks and social capital shed light on divergent outcomes for young people from different social class and ethnic backgrounds, who may be able to harness social capital, maximising opportunities and mitigate risks which are both a feature of educational transition.

Together, the existing research on social capital explanations of education inequalities provides a strong case for examining these processes in the Scottish context and for the need to examine migrant history alongside other axes of difference.

3.3.5 Discriminatory practices

So far, this section has identified from the literature four key explanations for educational inequalities – demographic, economic, cultural and social capital/class justifications. It has been acknowledged that these themes often overlap and intersect, however, this penultimate explanation is distinctive. As well as structural and cultural explanations for ethnic gaps in educational attainment, Lymperopoulou and Parameshwaran (2015) suggest that there is also a third explanation for ethnic inequalities in education; that of ethnic penalties. Ethnic

penalties can involve anticipation of discrimination in the workplace which may lead some students to remain longer in education. According to Lymperopoulou and Parameshwaran (2015), ethnic penalties exist even after taking into account social background, educational qualification, age and labour market experience. This connects closely to the paradox that many minority ethnic groups outperform their white peers in secondary education, yet face barriers to success at Higher Education. Several scholars have suggested that discriminatory practices play a part in this phenomenon (Noden, 2014; Shah et al., 2010).

David Gillborn, known for his academic work demonstrating how critical race theory relates to education, has argued that there is a variability in the educational performance both across and within minority groups (Gillborn, 1997, 2006; Gillborn & Mirza, 2000). He suggests that Asian students perform better on average than their African Caribbean peers, but each group is internally differentiated, particularly along lines of social class and gender (Gillborn & Mirza, 2000), findings which support the work reviewed above and emphasising the need for an intersectional interrogation of these issues. One distinction, according to Gillborn is the salience of ethnicity as a crucial factor in students' school lives. Empirical findings demonstrate that there are interconnections between forms of oppression that can cut across each other in unpredictable ways; a combination of race/sex stereotypes, for example, make educational success especially difficult for African Caribbean men living in their study areas of England and Wales (Gillborn, 2006). Similarly, this work highlights that South Asian students suffer disproportionate levels of verbal and physical harassment and can be subject to a range of patronizing stereotypes, at times these can operate to support their position where white teachers view Asians as more settled and studious than their black classmates.

Several studies have highlighted incidents of racism and discrimination towards Central and Eastern European migrants in the UK. Moskal (2016) found a tension between the policy discourse of inclusive nationalism in Scotland and the lived experience of this by young migrants in schools. McGhee, Heath and Trevena (2013) also highlight evidence of discrimination among Polish migrants who face structural barriers to their integration. More recently, research on Belonging in Brexit Britain by Tyrrell et al. (2018) brings into focus the impact of anti-immigration rhetoric in the UK. The rise in racist hate crime following the European referendum

has been well documented (Botterill, 2018; Burnett, 2017) and the work of Tyrrell et al. (2018) relate this to young people. Their study of Central and Eastern European children living in the UK reveals the uncertainty generated by the Brexit vote. Although it doesn't specifically identify examples of discriminatory practice, it is clear through previous research by Tereshchenko and Archer (2014) that as public attitudes to immigration are increasingly negative, incidents of racism and discrimination within schools continue to rise. Although discriminatory practices are not the focus of this thesis, these explanations provide an important context for understanding ethnic and migrant differences in educational outcomes and experiences.

3.3.6 Place-based explanations

The final explanatory theme, particularly evident in the geographic literature, highlights the importance of place through the transition to adulthood. A study by Tracey Reynolds examined 'placed identities in the transition to adulthood' (Reynolds, 2015). The research investigated the transitions of young black males in three deprived areas of London, the qualitative interviews took place with young people aged between 16-21 and their parents living in 'black neighbourhoods'. Reynolds concludes that a sense of place is critical to youth transition in these communities. Despite high levels of youth unemployment and crime, these neighbourhoods were perceived as places to gain social capital resources. Again, this theme ties to earlier explanations of social and cultural capital. In this study, these resources are derived from knowledge of the local area and ties such as trust and solidarity. Living in a 'black neighbourhood' was used by some young people to combat the everyday racism and exclusion which they experienced, again linking to the previous paragraph about discrimination. Reynolds (2015) concludes that this social and cultural capital was often not found to translate into access to the labour market or educational opportunities, which led to individuals living in poverty and frustration.

Similarly, Cairns argues that it is important to consider the importance of place and space when looking at transitions to adulthood. He argues that there is a 'sedentary

bias' in youth studies which assumes young people will be geographically static as they move between educational stages and the labour market (Cairns, 2014). Although his work focuses on student mobility, and primarily on Higher Education he encourages researchers to recognize the role of geographical movement in attempts to secure better, or at least different, experiences of transition.

In summary, this section has sought to summarise six common explanations for educational inequalities these are demographic, economic, cultural, social capital explanations, discriminatory practices and place-based accounts. These explanations were each discussed with reference to differences by social class, ethnicity and geography which form the basis of this study. These studies have illustrated the complex and intersecting causes of educational inequality. The literature has also identified a number of gaps which this study sets out to address. These will be summarised in the conclusion below.

3.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to examine prior research relating to the key theme of this thesis, educational inequalities. This has been achieved by interrogating the main theoretical debates on educational inequality, the evidence for educational inequality in Scotland and internationally and the literature for explanations for these inequalities. In summary, the first section focussed on reviewing the paradox in debates on the purpose of education: how education is understood both as a tool for encouraging social mobility and as an arena that reflects and even embeds social inequalities. A key theme within the educational discourse was the increasingly market-driven nature of education, often referred to as neoliberalism. The increasing focus on measurement and performance has, it is argued, devolved responsibility to individuals and removed the onus from institutions. It was found that this leaves certain groups less able than others to overcome structural barriers to success including those socio-economic and ethnic groups with lower social and economic capital. Several studies were reviewed which showed the powerlessness young people feel when considering options for the future. The review revealed that educational success in the UK and

internationally is often measured in very narrow terms, with implications for young people from different places and different ethnic and class backgrounds.

Next, the chapter focused on educational inequalities and examined both the evidence for inequalities and the explanations of them. The review of empirical studies showed that educational inequalities exist, and outcomes vary by class, gender and ethnicity. The review of explanations of these inequalities established six distinct explanations for these differences. These were demographic, economic, cultural, social capital and class explanations, discriminatory practices and finally, place-based explanations. Although these themes were identified as distinctive, it was clear that there are many overlaps and connections between them.

Together, Chapter 1, 2 and 3 demonstrate that transition to adulthood is a particularly vulnerable period in the lifecourse and the experiences and outcomes of school leavers merit closer attention because this period can have long term implications for individuals, families, communities and society. However, the literature on youth transition is fragmented and has been undertaken within disciplinary and methodological silos. In contrast, this study brings geographical perspectives on this important topic, and via an integrated approach, contributes both methodologically and conceptually to this field.

Through this comprehensive review of the literature, it is clear that there are attainment differences by gender, class and ethnicity, but there is uncertainty around whether these differences can be explained by known determinants of educational success or how these axes of difference may intersect with one another. This study addresses these gaps in extant knowledge by exploring the outcomes of school leavers in Scotland (RQ1), how experiences and aspirations are shaped through transition (RQ2) and how migrant background, class and geography intersect to create distinct pathways of educational transition (RQ3).

Chapter 4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the research design for this study, introducing the rationale for the methodological approach and explaining how the research was conducted and data were analysed. The chapter begins by setting out the aims of the project and details the methodological approach used to address each research question. Next there is a review of the research approach and finally there is an overview of the specific steps that were taken to generate and analyse the data.

The aim of this research is to investigate the experiences and outcomes of school leavers in Scotland. More specifically, it aims to find out how the educational transitions of young people from a migrant or minority background can be distinctive. Based on a critical review of the relevant literature, the following central research questions and methodological approaches have been developed. (Table 4-1)

Table 4-1 Research questions, data requirements and sources of data

	Research Questions	Methodological approach	Data Sources	Analysis
4. What does a mixed method approach bring to understanding in this field?	1.What factors influence the outcomes of school leavers in Scotland?	Both qualitative and quantitative	Novel linkage of two administrative datasets (Scottish Schools Census and School Leavers Survey) in conjunction with repeat in-depth interviews with school leavers (n=34) and two focus groups.	Detailed descriptive statistics Binary logistic regression Multinomial logistic regression Multilevel analysis Systematic analysis of all depth interviews (n=93) and focus groups (n=2) using NVivo.
	2.How does migrant and minority background shape experiences of educational transition?	Primarily qualitative	Repeat in-depth interviews with school leavers (n=34) and two focus groups.	Detailed analysis of all interview transcripts (n=93), field notes, focus group input and filmed material. Each coded using NVivo. Sorting activity used to address this question, coded in Excel.
	3.How do ethnicity, social class and geography intersect to create distinct pathways for young people from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds?	Both qualitative and quantitative	Novel linkage of two administrative datasets (Scottish Schools Census and School Leavers Survey) in conjunction with repeat in-depth interviews with school leavers (n=34) and two focus groups.	Detailed descriptive statistics and crosstabulations Analysis of the interaction effects using a binary logistic regression Systematic analysis of all in-depth interviews (n=93) and focus groups (n=2) using NVivo.

Source: Author's summary of research questions and methodology

4.2 Research approach

4.2.1 Epistemological stance

The work presented in this thesis draws on both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Historically, there has been a sharp divide between these two approaches (Creswell & Clark, 2007). Quantitative methods have often relied on a positivist epistemology – that is, the assumption that there is a real social world which can be observed and measured, albeit that observations may be mediated by the subjectivity of the observer (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008). In contrast, qualitative methods tend to be underpinned by an interpretivist epistemology – that is, the belief that the world is fluid and subjective, being created and recreated through interactions . Despite these apparent differences, Bryman (2017) suggests that research using either strategy can often draw on both epistemologies. For example, qualitative research can produce data about an 'objective reality' and quantitative work can produce data that adds to our understanding of subjective social meanings. Bryman (2017) also points out that both approaches have different strengths and therefore integrating them can harness the advantages of both. McEvoy and Richards (2006) note that although adopting an integrated mixed methods approach is now widely advocated, there are still complex ontological and epistemological issues that need to be resolved. In a recent paper reflecting on interdisciplinary research, Finney et al. (2018) argue that, despite its challenges, mixed methods research can challenge epistemological divisions, develop understanding of complex issues and be used as a tool for social change.

This study draws on the philosophy of critical realism, which offers an alternative to the paradigms of positivism and interpretivism (McEvoy & Richards, 2006). It is founded on some 'necessary truths' about the nature of the world and suggests that structures and processes form a point of reference against which a theory can be tested. It also concedes that it is impossible to fully comprehend the world because theory and investigative interests always shape the researchers' perspectives. This study on inequalities and education does not assume that any regularity (in the data) is a specific case of a more general law. Critical realism sets

out to explain social processes and acknowledge the significance (and power) of structural influences and individual agency (Creswell, 2013). In this thesis, this means that the philosophical approach acknowledges the role of individuals (their ability and motivation), but also acknowledges the structuring influences outside their control at a range of scales (changes to the curriculum, access to additional educational resources, household factors).

4.2.2 Mixed methods

As discussed in Section 2.5, this research sets out to draw together concepts and methodological approaches which are often examined separately. Thus, it adopts an integrated approach to mixed methods research. By incorporating a range of methods, through an integrated design, different tools are used and will represent different approaches to knowledge (Creswell, 2013; Hesse-Biber, 2010). In essence, the thesis aims to do more than run two projects in parallel, asking similar questions but answering them using different methodological tools. Instead, it set out to use data which are different, data which are conceived of differently, data which come through a range of methods, allowing them to speak to each other (Mason, 2011). This approach seeks to avoid some of the pitfalls of a triangulation approach to mixed methods, such as allowing one method to dominate and creating a methodological hierarchy (Mertens & Hesse-Biber, 2012). Fauser (2018) suggests that the convergent design 'serves as a way of looking at a phenomenon from different angles, shedding light on its various dimensions rather than controlling the results obtained with one method by using another' (Fauser, 2018; 408). The research then, incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to contribute to multiple perspectives and subjective realities. This is not an enquiry which sets out to discover objective truth but rather bring multiple perspectives to the theme of educational transitions.

In practice, the quantitative and qualitative research in this study have been carried out simultaneously and have been used to inform one another throughout the phases of research and analysis. For example, initially, *Level of English* had not been added as a variable in the statistical analysis. However, the cohort of school

leavers in the qualitative sample included young people who had just arrived in Scotland and spoke very little English, it became apparent that this could make a significant difference to destination after school, hence Level of English was added to the models. Similarly, findings from the quantitative analysis were then raised through the longitudinal qualitative work. This iterative process, allowing the methods to connect and inform one another over time was crucial.

Scholars suggest that this approach to mixed methods research is particularly important when setting out to understand marginal groups where 'practices and understandings may differ greatly from those of the researchers who […] are often better educated, non-migrant, and immigration country centred, as well as structurally positioned within the asymmetrical relation that characterises immigration and emigration countries' (Fauser, 2018; 408). Therefore, this research has been designed with specific attention to the potential disparity in power dynamics and with an awareness that this mixed methods approach will introduce multiple forms of data collection which can provide insights which might not otherwise have been possible.

In summary, the quantitative and qualitative strands of the research were designed to complement each other and offer a fuller picture of the experiences and outcomes of school leavers. This approach sets out not merely to allow analysis at different scales (from the national to the individual) but also to bring contrasting epistemological approaches, allowing fresh conceptualisation of the topic of educational inequalities. Two of the three empirical chapters which follow (Chapter 5 and Chapter 7) interweave findings from the quantitative analysis with qualitative research and create an interface between them.

4.3 Quantitative research

The first of the research questions relates to the factors which influence the outcomes of school leavers. The review of literature has demonstrated that studies using large datasets can be an effective resource for interrogating school leaver outcomes (Iannelli & Duta, 2018; Meeus, 2011; Strand, 2008). Such studies can provide detailed analysis of a large sample of school leavers highlighting the spatial

and temporal trends, as well as generating statistical models which can identify common associates of educational success.

4.3.1 Reviewing the quantitative data available

In this study, the dataset needed to have four key elements in order to effectively address the research questions. Firstly, a large enough sample size to facilitate statistically meaningful analysis of population subgroups, such as those from minority ethnic backgrounds (who make up 15 per cent of school leavers in Scotland). Secondly, a record of school leaver destination (rather than simply qualifications) and ideally this longitudinal element would permit the dynamic nature of educational transition to be captured by not simply gathering information on qualifications but also destinations of school leavers. Thirdly, the dataset also had to contain detailed socio-economic, demographic, attainment data so that the characteristics of school leavers could be interrogated. Finally, it was important that the data included spatial variables which could be disaggregated to lower geographies than the national scale. This would allow multilevel analysis which helps to explore the influence of neighbourhood/geographical factors in educational outcomes. The sections below provides descriptions of the datasets which were considered for use in the analysis and of the rationale for choosing the linkage of the School Census and the School Leavers Survey.

Table 4-2 The strengths and weaknesses of five potentially valuable datasets

Dataset	Sample size	Strengths	Weaknesses
Youth Cohort Study (YCS)	Latest sweep n=4829	Nationally representative source of information on educational attainment by ethnicity prior to the 2000s	Only covers England and Wales (but from Cohort Thirteen, data cover England only.)
Next Steps (previously called the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England or LSYPE)	n=16,122	Large dataset with over 13,000 young people. Sufficient size for exploring socio-economic and ethnic differences	Only covers England
Growing up in Scotland (GUS)	Latest sweep n=4,434	Large longitudinal dataset with two birth cohorts. Scottish study with regional representation.	Study started in 2005 and participants have not yet left school.
Scottish Longitudinal Survey (SLS)	N=270,947 (whole population) A 5.3 per cent sample of school leavers would be n=2500 per year	Detailed information about household and individual level characteristics. Including all Pupil Census records and qualifications.	5.3 per cent sample of the Scottish population. Number of school leavers too small (particularly when aggregated by geography/ethnicity etc.) and data only available back to 2007.
The Scottish School Leavers Survey and Follow Up (SLSS) linked to the Scottish School Census	n=50,000 school leavers each year	Linking the Scottish School Census with the initial and follow-up leaver destination surveys allows an element of longitudinal analysis of all school leavers in Scotland since 2009/10.	Follow Up survey is a sample of the whole (school-leaving) population.

Source: Author's summary of five datasets drawing on information from UK Data Service (https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk)

As outlined in Table 4-2 several large datasets were considered for use in this project. The *Youth Cohort Study (YCS)* is a major programme of longitudinal research designed to monitor the behaviour and decisions of representative samples of young people aged 16 years onwards as they make the transition from compulsory education to further or higher education, or to the labour market. This makes the YCS particularly relevant to this research, it has a particular focus on trying to identify and explain the factors which influence post-16 transitions, for example, educational attainment, training opportunities, experiences at school. To date, the YCS covers 13 cohorts and over 40 surveys (starting in 1985). This long period represents a real strength of this dataset and would allow analysis of school leavers over a period of time. The major drawback of the dataset for the purposes of this study is that it only contains information on students in England and Wales (and latterly only England). What is required to adequately address research question one is a dataset that addresses the issues unique to Scotland.

The Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE), now known as Next Steps, is one of the main quantitative sources for the academics and policy makers in research relating to young people in the UK. There are now two separate LSYPE studies. The first LSYPE study began in 2004, when its sample of young people was aged between 13 and 14. The young people were interviewed annually until 2010 and there are now seven waves of data available. The second LSYPE study began in 2013 and will track a sample of over 13,000 young people from the age of 13/14 annually through to the age of 20 (seven waves). The size (13,000 participants) and regularity of this study are its major strengths but again, the focus on England makes it unsuitable for this research.

Thirdly, the Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) study, which began in 2005, is a large-scale longitudinal social survey which follows the lives of groups of Scotland's children from infancy through to their teens and aims to provide important new information on young children and their families in Scotland. The study forms a central part of the Scottish Government's strategy for the long-term monitoring and evaluation of its policies for children, with a specific focus on the early years. Unlike other similar cohort studies mentioned above, this survey has a specifically Scottish focus. This will be a valuable resource for future research, but the study has not yet been running long enough to be of use for this project. The first study cohort in GUS (Birth Cohort 1) are currently age 12 and entering S1 in 2016/2017.

The second study cohort (Birth Cohort 2) are currently aged 10. This study has included over 14,000 participants from families from every Local Authority area in Scotland. Once these young people reach school leaving age, the opportunities for youth transition studies with a Scottish focus will have a rich and detailed dataset.

The fourth option outlined in the table is the Scottish Longitudinal Study (SLS). This longitudinal dataset has been used extensively by academics examining the trajectories of young people (Iannelli & Duta, 2018; Ralston et al., 2016). At the outset of this research project (including in the original research proposal), the intention was to base the quantitative analysis on this data source. The SLS provides a 5.3 per cent sample of Scotland and is based around the Censuses of 1991, 2001 and 2011 and links these to each other and with administrative health and education data. Thus, it allows analysis of educational qualifications and early career trajectories for a sample of the Scottish population. The SLS provides invaluable data about the characteristics of school leavers in a household context. It also allows detailed analysis of a range of variables beyond educational attainment, including country of birth, internal migration patterns and ethnic background. These data would generate a detailed picture of the background of school leavers over time and across geographic areas. Despite the many benefits to using the SLS, the main challenge for this research is the sample size. The number of school leavers within the 5.3 per cent national sample is small, but potentially useful, however once this is broken down by ethnic background or local authority, the numbers proved too small for meaningful analysis. For example, this would be equivalent to approximately n=10 White Polish school leavers per year. The SLS provides a rich national picture, but is unsuitable for this study, which seeks to understand the influence of spatial, ethnic and socio-economic differences in the destination of school leavers.

In summary, following a robust assessment of each dataset, a final solution was considered, that of the novel linkage of two administrative datasets: the Scottish School Census and the School Leavers Survey. Together, these linked datasets could meet the four key criteria required for this research (set out above) namely, a large sample size, a record of post-school destination rather than just qualifications, socio-economic and demographic data about the characteristics of school leavers and this information at lower geographies.

4.3.2 Introducing the Scottish School Census and School Leavers Survey

The research design centred on the linking of two administrative datasets, providing a large sample (n=50,000 per year) and enabling the analysis of national trends in the educational outcomes of school leavers between 2006-2016 (n=471,317). Adding Scottish School Census data to these records ensured detailed ethnic and social stratification would be possible, thereby providing a powerful analytical tool to interrogate post-school destinations in Scotland.

The Scottish School Census is carried out annually and captures a wide variety of information on pupils in all publicly funded schools in Scotland. This includes the Scottish candidate number, pupil personal details, stage of school, status at the school, home postcode, and any support or special educational needs. The survey takes place each September and is designed to include every school aged child in Scotland. The use of the Scottish candidate number means these data can be linked with other administrative datasets (including the Scottish School Leavers Survey). The Scottish Government have sponsored surveys of school-leavers and young people since the early 1970s and these include the first incarnation of the Scottish School Leavers Survey which, in the mid-1980s, was subsumed within the broader Scottish Young People's Survey (SYPS). Following a review in 1991 of the use made of the findings by the Scottish Executive Education and Industry Department (SEEID), the survey was redesigned and resumed the title of the Scottish School Leavers Survey. A further review in 1996 led to the establishment of the current design

Importantly for this study, these data are available at an individual pupil level and there is a longitudinal element to the survey which has two phases, an initial survey (carried out after 3 months) and a follow up survey (after 9 months). Skills Development Scotland, in conjunction with schools and Local Authorities, facilitate the survey and collate destination data on all school leavers. Since 2012/13, Skills Development Scotland have used a hybrid approach to data collection, including drawing on data shared by partners and follow up phone calls. Thus, Destination is based on self-reporting by school leavers themselves or administrative data held by schools or local authorities. The Initial Survey is conducted in September each

year (three months after an individual has left school) and the Follow Up survey takes place in March (nine months later). School leavers who moved out of Scotland, were deceased or who had returned to school between the initial and follow up survey are not included. Follow up rates have been very high in recent years (Scottish Government, 2018a), however, a small proportion of pupils cannot be linked across the datasets (around 0.2 per cent) and these cases are excluded from the analysis.

In summary, the Scottish Schools Census provides detailed information about every pupil in Scotland (personal details, stage of school, status at the school, home postcode, and any support or special needs). The Scottish School Leavers Survey (SSLS) provides information about school leavers in Scotland (birth, gender, home postcode, and destination category). Both datasets are updated annually, and both feature the Scottish Candidate Number (SCN). Together these administrative datasets fulfil the requirements of this study; a Scottish dataset, with a large national sample, longitudinal in nature (for temporal and spatial analysis) and featuring young people aged between 16 and 25.

4.3.3 Data access

Access to these data entailed several important steps, some of which occurred in parallel. First, an application to the Scottish Government Data Access Panel which was approved in October 2016. A Data Sharing Agreement was developed between the University of St Andrews and Education Analytical Services (EAS) within the Scottish Government, which permitted access to the datasets until March 2022 or sooner at the discretion of EAS. An important step was the successful completion of Safe User of Research Data Environments (SURE) training, which provided an understanding of the legal and procedural responsibilities of data access. In addition, a further application was made to the Administrative Data Research Centre Scotland (ADRC-S) to allow these sensitive data to be stored securely within the National Services Scotland Safe Haven. The Safe Haven could be accessed from several remote access points (in Glasgow, Dundee and St Andrews) or at the ADRC-S main facility at the Bioquarter in Edinburgh. All activity

within the secure electronic environment was closely monitored and staff from the Administrative Data Research Centre Scotland (ADRC-S) checked each output from the Safe Haven using statistical disclosure control methods. Access was granted to the datasets in April 2017. Analysis began in May 2017 and continued until July 2018 over the course of twenty one separate sessions. The variables in the linked dataset are included in Appendix A.

The Sample

The analysis in this thesis focuses on a subset (n=257,167) of the total number of school leavers (n=471,317) in the linked datasets. The dataset was cleaned, excluding entries with a large number of missing fields and pupils who could not be linked across the datasets (n=94). The final sample included school leavers who left school between 20th September 2012 and 19th September 2017. This decision was made in consultation with Education Analytical Services (EAS) within the Scottish Government, who recommended using a shorter time series for two reasons. Firstly, methodological changes in the destination survey have resulted in a lack of comparability with information prior to 2009/10. Secondly, the ethnic categories changed in 2011/12 (in line with the 2011 Census questions on ethnicity). Therefore, a shorter time series (2012-2016) is used to allow for robust and consistent analysis.

4.3.4 Approach to the analysis

The analysis was carried out using a combination of two statistical packages, SPSS for the initial exploratory analysis and Stata for more complex analysis including the logistic regression. The first few sessions in the Safe Haven were spent understanding the structure and content of the data, including the implications of the change in ethnic categories from 2011/12. A series of robustness checks revealed that the data had sometimes been entered inconsistently (for example, Further Education had in some years been shortened to ‘FE’). Therefore, some variables were recoded, and the dataset cleaned ready

for analysis. Analysis was run to explore dropout rate between the two time points, the relationship between destination and a range of factors, including gender, geography, area deprivation and ethnicity. This analysis was performed on each year cohort individually at first. This extensive analysis on separate cohorts often returned small cell sizes, particularly for crosstabulations of ethnicity.

Ethnicity variables

Some ethnic groups (for example Caribbean or Black - Other) were small. This was particularly challenging when the groups were further disaggregated (by destination for example) the numbers were too small to be released as they risked breaching statistical disclosure guidelines. As a result, the ethnic categories were aggregated to allow detailed analysis with fewer than 10 pupils in a group. As Burton, Nandi and Platt (2010), suggest there are numerous challenges with measuring and organising ethnic categories. The recoding was driven by a theoretical understanding of ethnicity (outlined in Section 2.3.2) and practical guidelines published by the Office for National Statistics (Office for National Statistics, 2018). It retains the disaggregation of the majority of ethnic groups, particularly those which have been highlighted as significant from the literature, Asian Chinese for example. The creation of a composite 'Other' category includes three diverse ethnic groups (Other, White Gypsy/Traveller and Other – Arab). As they are not the focus of this research, this is not seen as a major concern in the analysis.

Table 4-3 Original ethnic groups, school leavers from 2001/12-2016-17 (ordered by number of school leavers, descending)

Original codes	Original ethnic groups	Number of school leavers 2012-2017	Proportion of pupils 2012-2017 (per cent)
1	White - Scottish	231,127	89.87
2	White - Other British	6,259	2.43
3	White - Other	4,812	1.87
4	Asian - Pakistani / British / Scottish	3,558	1.38
5	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2,125	0.83
6	Not Disclosed	1,474	0.57
7	Not Known	1,354	0.53
8	Asian - Indian/British/Scottish	1,025	0.40
9	White - Polish	1,006	0.39
10	Asian - Other	993	0.39
11	African - African / Scottish / British	967	0.38
12	Asian - Chinese / British / Scottish	888	0.35
13	Other - Other	708	0.28
14	Asian - Bangladeshi / British / Scottish	200	0.08
15	White - Irish	149	0.06
16	White - Gypsy / Traveller	144	0.06
17	African - Other	126	0.05
18	Caribbean or Black – Caribbean / British / Scottish	101	0.04
19	Other - Arab	79	0.03
20	Caribbean or Black - Other	72	0.03
	Total	**257,167**	**100**

Source: Author's own analysis of the linked datasets

Table 4-4 Recoded ethnic groups, school leavers from 2001/12-2016-17 (ordered by number of school leavers, descending)

Original codes	*New code*	Recoded ethnic category	Number of school leavers 2012-2017	Proportion of pupils 2012-2017 (per cent)
1	1	White Scottish	231,127	89.87
2	2	White - Other British	6,259	2.43
3	3	White Other	4,812	1.87
4	4	Asian Pakistani	3,558	1.38
6,7	5	Not disclosed/Not known	2,828	1.10
5	6	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2,125	0.83
11,17,18,20	7	African/Caribbean/Black	1,266	0.49
8	8	Asian Indian	1,025	0.40
9	9	White Polish	1,006	0.39
10	10	Asian Other	993	0.39
13,16,19	11	Other	931	0.36
12	12	Asian Chinese	888	0.35
14	13	Asian Bangladeshi	200	0.08
15	14	White Irish	149	0.06
		Total	**257,167**	**100**

Source: Author's own analysis of the linked datasets

Descriptive statistics were used to interrogate the data and describe how school leaver destinations vary according to a range of individual, school and regional characteristics. In the analysis, there are four possible post-school destinations: Higher Education, Further Education, Employment and Training or Other. This is summarised in Table 4-5.

Table 4-5: Detailed description of destinations

Destination	Description
Higher Education	Higher Education includes leavers following HND (Higher National Diploma) or HNC (Higher National Certificate) courses, degree courses, courses for the education and training of teachers and higher level courses for professional qualifications. Leavers with a deferred, unconditional place in higher education have also been included in this category.
Further Education	Further Education includes leavers undertaking full-time education which is not higher education and who are no longer on a school roll. This may include National Qualifications.
Employment, Training and Voluntary work	Employment: includes those who are employed and in receipt of payment from their employers. The recoded variable also includes young people undertaking training, activity agreements and apprenticeships. Finally, it includes those who are registered as volunteers.
Other	Includes those who are unemployed seeking employment, unemployed not seeking employment, unknown and excluded.

Source: Based on Scottish Government definition of follow up destination (Scottish Government, 2018a)

As well as detailed descriptive analysis, advanced statistical analysis was also undertaken to assess the extent to which destinations are structured by individual, school, neighbourhood and regional factors. Logistic regression analysis was used explore the associates of different outcomes after school. The outcome variable (or dependent variable) is the Follow Up Destination of school leaver, i.e. gathered nine months after leaving school. In the multinomial analysis there were four outcomes (Higher Education, Further Education, Employment and Training or Other, see table 4-6) and in the binary logistic regression there were two outcomes (Higher Education or not attending Higher Education). All analysis uses 95 per cent confidence intervals.

Table 4-5 provides an overview of the derived variables which were used in the analysis, presenting a description and summary of the rationale for their inclusion in the analysis. For a more detailed overview of why each variable was selected,

refer to section 3.3 which outlines the six key explanations for educational inequalities and thus the reason for including these variables.

Table 4-6: Overview of the variables used in analysis, including description, source and uses in the literature

Variable	Description	Source	Literature
DEPENDENT VARIABLE			
Post School (Follow up) Destination	*Higher Education, Further Education Employment, Training and work Or Other*	Scottish Schools Leavers Survey	*The importance of post-16 pathways for long term outcomes and social mobility (Belfield, Cribb, Hood, & Joyce, 2016; HM Government, 2018; Loveday, 2015; Schoon & Lyons-Amos, 2016)*
INDEPENDENT (EXPLANATORY) VARIABLES			
Ethnicity	Using the post 2011/12 ethnic categories which record White Polish as a separate group.	Pupil Census 2016	Differential outcomes for ethnic groups in education and the labour market *(Catney & Sabater, 2015; Croxford & Raffe, 2014; Finney, 2011; Johnston, Khattab & Manley, 2015; Simpson et al., 2009)*
Individual characteristics			
Gender	Binary category male and female	Pupil Census 2016	Educational achievements and the intersections between ethnicity, SES and gender (Dollmann, 2017; Strand, 2014)
Deprivation	Based on the 2012 SIMD categories	Pupil Census 2016	Residential segregation and inequality in educational attainment (McKinney et al., 2012; Quillian, 2014)
Free school meal registration	Pupils registered as entitled to free school meals	Pupil Census 2016	The impact of parental background on school leavers' status (Iannelli & Duta, 2018)
National Identity	Recoded into UK identity (Scottish, English, NI, Welsh, British) or other National Identity	Pupil Census 2016	Exploring ethnic and racial classifications of migrant children in the UK. (Kesler & Schwartzman, 2015)
Level of English	Recoded as English as a first language or English as a second language or other	Pupil Census 2016	Role of language acquisition and education performance in the UK and elsewhere. (Esser, 2006; Lindemann & Saar, 2012)
Geography	Using the Scottish Government two-fold categorisation of Urban/Rural areas.	Scottish Government two-fold Urban/Rural measure based on datazone of school leaver	The importance of spatial trends in poverty and inequality. (Kavanagh et al., 2016)
Age of school leaver	Year of birth subtracted from year left school	Pupil Census and SSLS	Research reveals an inverse relationship between the age of a school leaver and labour market outcomes (Patiniotis & Holdsworth, 2005) (Spielhofer et al., 2007)
School characteristics			
Deprivation	School level deprivation divided into quartiles	Scottish Government published	Exploring the role of deprived schools and neighbourhoods in London and the US. (Galster, 2012;

		schools data (March 2017)	Greaves, Macmillan & Sibieta, 2014)
Size	Size of school roll (divided by 100)	Scottish Government published schools data (March 2017)	Social mobility in schools and the role of school characteristics. (Greaves et al., 2014)
Denomination	Non-denominational and Roman Catholic school	Scottish Government published schools data (March 2017)	Multilevel analysis on the neighbourhood effects on educational attainment (Garner & Raudenbush, 1991; Garner & Bhattacharyya, 2011)
Urban/Rural	Rurality of school	Scottish Government published schools data (March 2017)	Explores the link between geography and access to schools / regional inequalities (Hannum & Wang, 2006)
Diversity	Proportion of school from a minority ethnic background	Scottish Government published schools data (March 2017)	Examines impact of residential segregation of school children (Harris, 2017)
Regional characteristics			
Destinations	Proportion of school leavers in the Local Authority who progress to Higher Education	Scottish Government published data on Initial Destinations of Senior Phase School Leavers.	Limited evidence for this, however existing work on the role of neighbourhoods on educational attainment (Garner & Raudenbush, 1991; Garner & Bhattacharyya, 2011; Kavanagh et al., 2016)
Access to Higher Education	Number of Higher Education institutions in the Local Authority.	Scottish Funding Council list of HEI 2017	Social class, ethnicity and other factors which influence access to University (Croxford & Raffe, 2014)

Note: There may be time differences in the data collection of independent and dependent variables, given that Scottish Schools Census information is collected annually each September and the Scottish School Leavers Survey (Follow Up) occurs takes place in March, up to eighteen months later.

Multi-level analysis

Multi-level modelling has become an increasingly popular approach as data processing capacity has developed (Plewis, 2011) allowing researchers to test hypotheses that cannot be tested with conventional regression models (Silvia, 2007). It has been used extensively in the field of neighbourhood effects (Van Ham & Feijten, 2008), as well as within education research (Garner & Raudenbush, 1991; Harris, 2017) to explore multiple levels (or hierarchies) in the data. In this study, the approach is intuitive given that the linked data include variables at multiple spatial scales (individuals, school-level, regional) and the study is interested in the clustering of post-educational outcomes according to school, neighbourhood and region. A multilevel approach provides one means of accounting for the non-independence of the post-school outcomes of children

living in the same area or attending the same school. The literature on sufficient sample sizes for multilevel modelling finds that even if group sizes are very small (down to 5 units per group), estimates of regression coefficients and variance components are unbiased as long as there are a large number of groups (more than 50) (Maas & Hox, 2005). Given that there are 333 schools in the analysis with an average of 500 pupils per school, by these criteria the analysis can be considered robust.

A random intercept model is fitted with levels of individuals nested within schools. When running the models a stepwise approach ensured variables were added gradually, these included individual characteristics (gender, Level of English, eligibility for free school meals); school characteristics (number of pupils, SIMD); and regional characteristics (level of rurality and number of Universities in the region). The multi-level analysis explored hierarchies within the data, namely to what extent the variations in school leaver destinations reflect differences in the composition of schools rather than other influences, including ethnic identity itself. This analysis in the full model can establish the extent to which ethnic differences persist even when accounting for school composition and other individual and regional correlates of school leaver destinations . If they do, it is possible to conclude that it is something about ethnic group identity – beyond the individual, school and regional characteristics, and any potential sorting into schools by ethnicity – that is shaping young people's post-school trajectories.

4.4 Qualitative research

The quantitative methodology has been designed to assess the educational outcomes of school leavers (RQ1) and the intersections between the characteristics of these school leavers (RQ3). This approach allows analysis of how post-school destinations are associated with a range of factors (geography, gender, socio-economic background, ethnicity) and how these differences interact with one another. This section outlines the methods for the qualitative data collection. This strand of analysis contributes to all the research questions (see Table 4-1). A qualitative methodological approach allows exploration of the dynamics of transition from the perspective of school leavers themselves. The steps taken to research these 'everyday practices' are discussed in detail in the sections which follow.

4.4.1 Introducing the case study areas

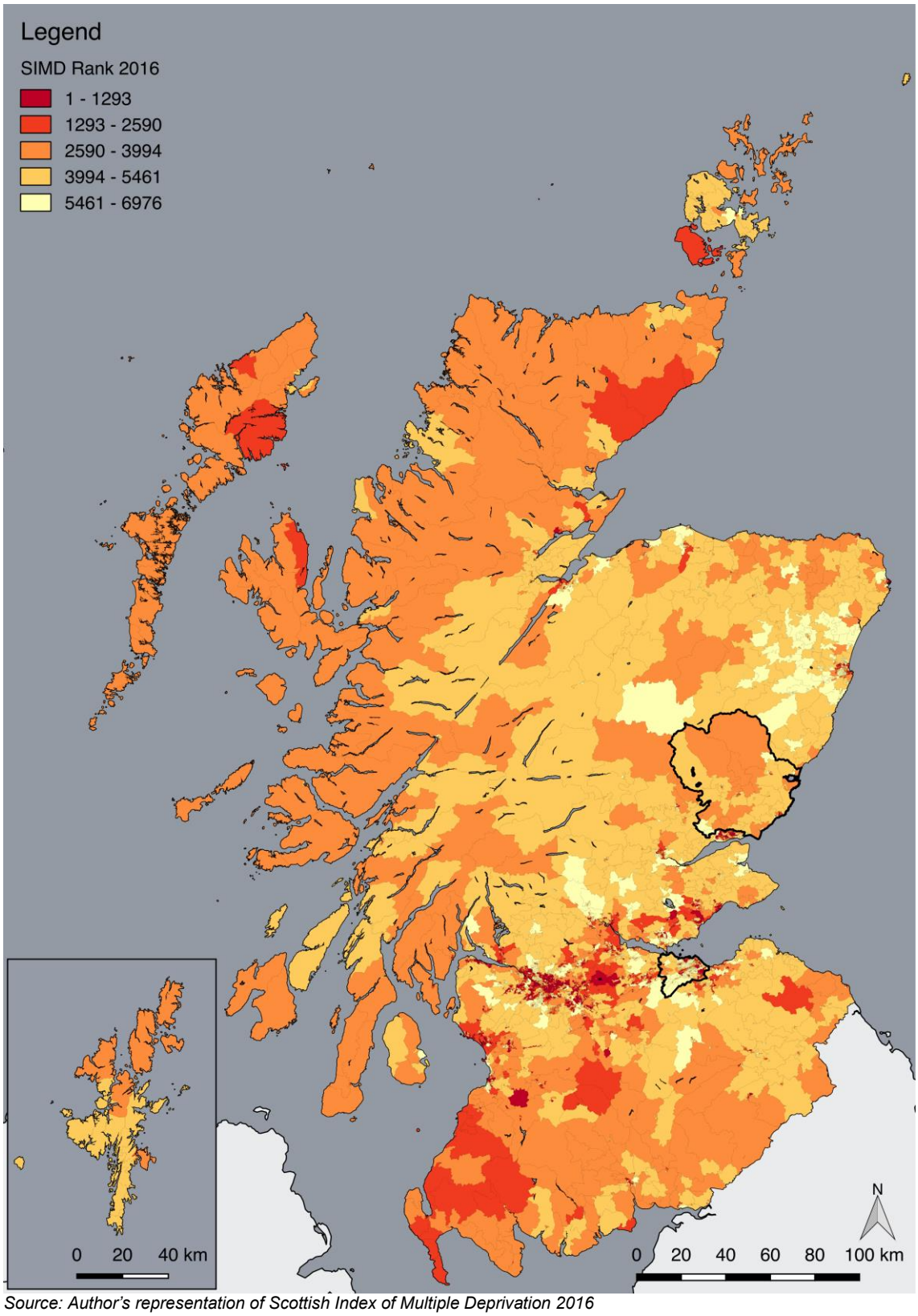
The review of extant literature reveals that further research is needed to explore the experiences of school leavers in Scotland (Eisenstadt, 2016) particularly with a focus on the growing proportion of young people from minority and migrant backgrounds (Moskal, 2014; Netto et al., 2011). Qualitative approaches provide an opportunity to develop our understanding of educational transitions and to consider the structuring influences of ethnicity, social class and geography.

As described in the literature, educational transitions involve change over both time (Worth, 2009) and space (Valentine, 2003). In order to reflect these important themes, this study has adopted a longitudinal and multi-sited methodology. It adopts a case study approach which provides in-depth analysis of the lived experiences of young people in two schools across Scotland, one in an urban area and one in a smaller semi-rural location.

The Council Areas of Edinburgh and Angus (see Figure 4-1) were selected as the case study areas for three reasons; demographic, educational and geographic. Both areas have experienced changes in the composition of their population over the last decade. For detailed analysis of 2011 Census Microdata in this regard, see

Appendix B. In summary, the Census points to a similar increase in the population size between 2001-11 (6 per cent and 7 per cent increase in population in Edinburgh and Angus respectively). The shift in population has been driven by both internal and international migration rather than natural change. The two areas are different in size and composition, but have both experienced population growth, which in turn impacts school rolls. Secondly, educationally both areas have a link to the same national agencies (Skills Development Scotland, Colleges and Universities Scotland etc.), but each area also has distinct difference (discussed further below). School pupils in Edinburgh are offered the 'Edinburgh Guarantee', while in Angus there have been other high-profile initiatives to support school leavers through transition (e.g. Angus Council 16+ Learning Choices initiative). Finally, the two areas represent very different geographies, in terms of educational and employment opportunities. There are four Universities in Edinburgh, a large urban area, and none in Angus, which is predominantly rural or semi-rural. The labour market in Edinburgh has local, national and global links with a mix of sectors represented in the local economy. In Angus, the agriculture sector is a large employer alongside tourism and the public sector. These areas share some similarities, but also represent significantly different regions to provide a rich contrast. The following paragraphs provide a brief background to the two case study areas.

Figure 4-1 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 of Scotland, showing Council Area boundary for City of Edinburgh and Angus



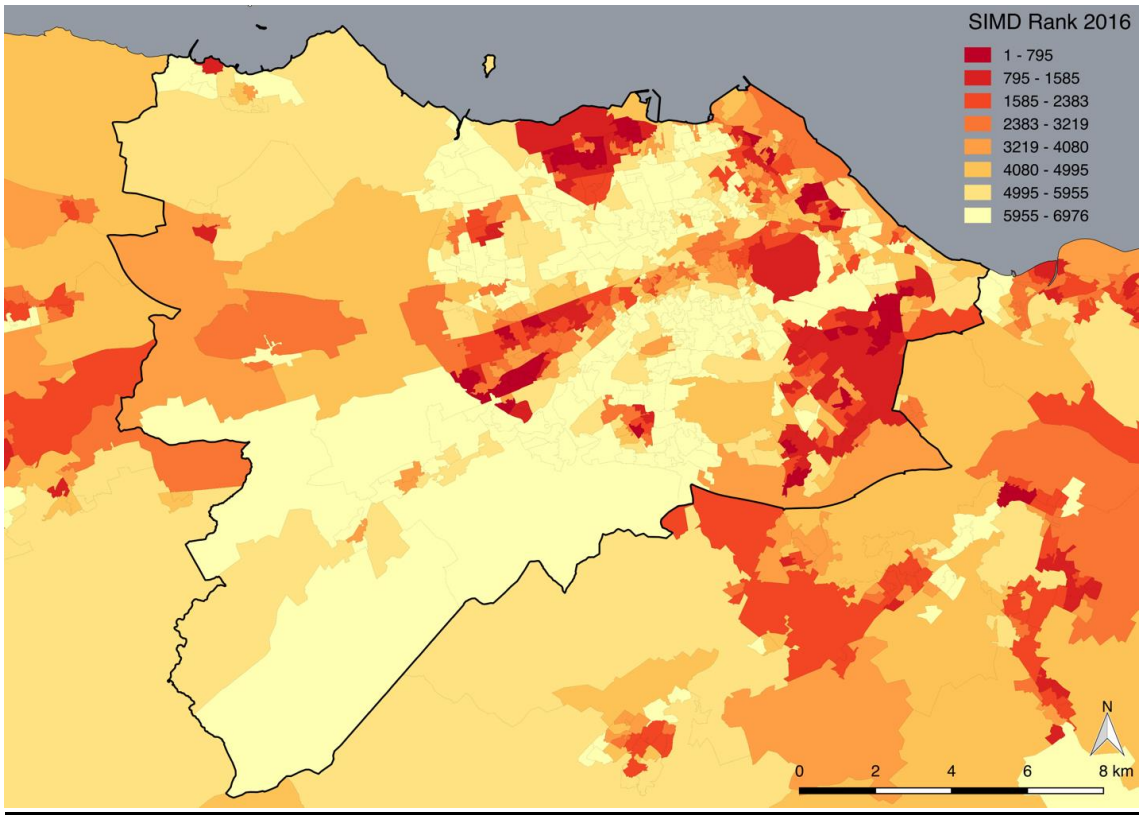
Source: Author's representation of Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016

City of Edinburgh

Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland and one of its 32 local government Council Areas. Located in the south east of the country, it has a population of just under 500,000 and is Scotland's second most populous city. Edinburgh is a well-established centre for political, financial and cultural activities with a global outlook. The Scottish Parliament, with devolved powers from the UK Government (including in the area of education) is based in the city. There are twenty government funded secondary schools in the City of Edinburgh Council Area (17 non-denominational and 3 Roman Catholic). In addition to this there are 21 private schools catering to a range of ages. Edinburgh has one of the highest rates of independently educated pupils in the UK; according to the Scottish Council for Independent Schools (SCIS), Edinburgh educates almost one fifth of its pupils independently (Independent Schools Council 2015). The City of Edinburgh Council introduced 'The Edinburgh Guarantee' in 2011. The vision is 'that all sectors in the city will work together to ensure that every young person in Edinburgh will leave school with the choice of a job, training or further education opportunity available to them' (Edinburgh Guarantee, 2019; para 1). The scheme began after concerns were raised at the number of state-educated pupils in Edinburgh who were not moving into work or further education after leaving school, especially compared with other local authorities in Scotland. In 2011 over 500 young people, over 17 per cent of the city's school leavers, left school into unemployment, unable to secure work or a place in Further or Higher Education. The City of Edinburgh Council developed a city-wide partnership, which is branded the Edinburgh Guarantee. In 2016, 92 per cent of school leavers entered a 'positive destination' when leaving secondary education – an 11 per cent increase compared to 2011.

Figure 4-2 represents the 2016 SIMD rank within Edinburgh, with darker colours indicating the communities ranked the most deprived 20 per cent datazones. The map reveals that pockets of multiple deprivation are spatially distributed across the city.

Figure 4-2 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 for City of Edinburgh Council Area (1=most deprived)



Source: Author's representation of Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016

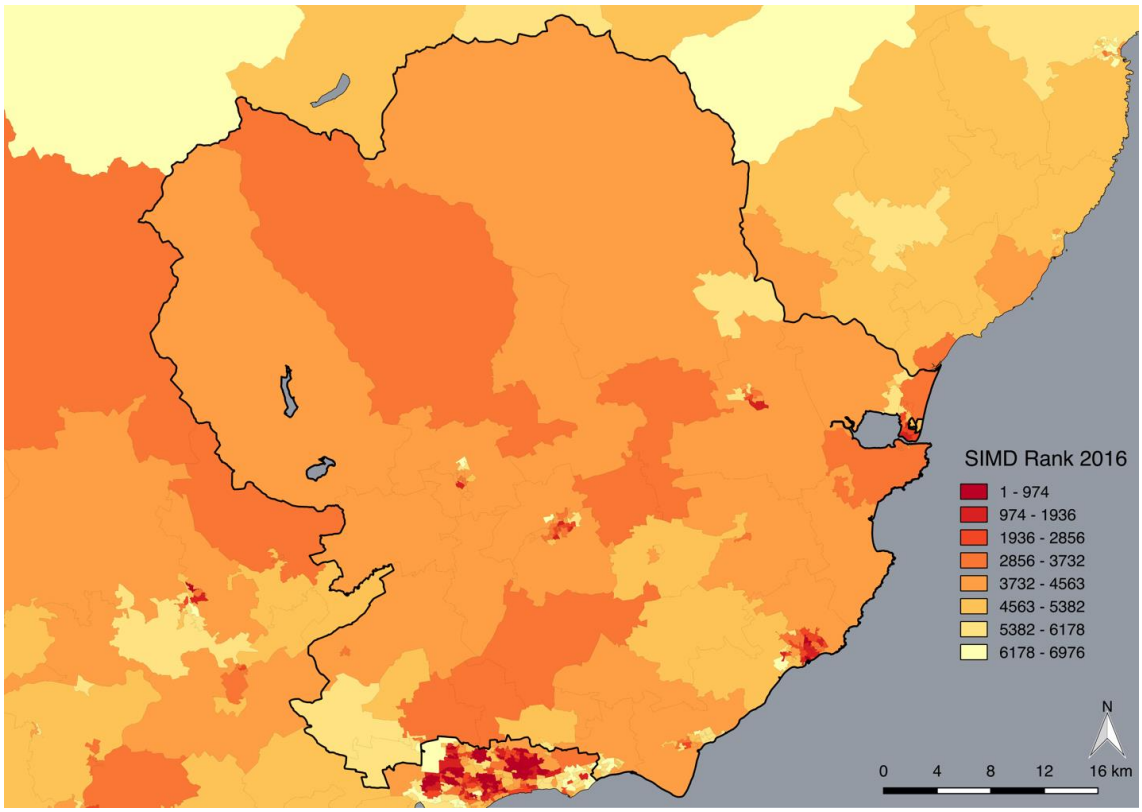
A key requirement of the study is to establish schools with socio-economic and ethnic diversity. Edinburgh provides this diversity and yet remains under researched. Glasgow has historically had higher rates of immigration and been the focus of research and policy attention with regards to migration and inclusion. However, the 2011 Census highlighted a number of changes in the demography of Edinburgh which merit further investigation. Figures show that Edinburgh has become more ethnically diverse. Between 2001 and 2011, the non-White population of Edinburgh grew from 18,300 to 39,500. The proportion of the city's total population who are ethnic minorities has more than doubled, from 4.0 per cent to 8.2 per cent, although this is still small compared to many other larger cities across the UK. Many residents in Edinburgh were born outside the UK (15.9 per cent), which is more than double the Scottish average of 7.0 per cent (National Records of Scotland, 2011). The age profile of these (non-UK born) residents is fascinating and has a direct link to schools. The vast majority (63,000 or 85 per

cent) of non-UK migrants living in Edinburgh were aged 29 or under when they arrived in the UK, around a third were under the age of 19 and likely to be engaged in education (National Records of Scotland, 2011). These significant demographic shifts make Edinburgh a suitable location to use as a case study in this research.

Angus

Angus is a rural area in eastern Scotland and another of the 32 local government Council Areas. It borders three Council Areas: Aberdeenshire, Dundee City and Perth and Kinross. The current population of the region of Angus is 116,000 people and features low population density of 130/sq. mi (Edinburgh has a density of 4,730/sq. mi). The population of Angus rose by 7 per cent between 2001 and 2011. Since the accession of eight countries to the EU in 2004, Angus has attracted European migrants to work in the agricultural sector, including seasonal migrants. According to 2011 Census figures (see Appendix B) around 4 per cent of the population were not born in the UK or Ireland (5,200 people) and around half of non-UK born residents are from EU countries. These demographic changes since 2004 have added to the ethnic and cultural diversity of the region. There are eight secondary schools in Angus serving small towns and rural areas. Figure 4-3 shows a map of the spatial distribution of multiple deprivation in the Angus region. It highlights that there are fewer communities than in Edinburgh which are ranked as the most deprived datazones (indicated by darker shades on the map), although this composite index hides aspects of rural poverty and isolation which are associated with sparsely populated regions (Kavanagh et al., 2016).

Figure 4-3 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 for Angus Council Area (1=most deprived)



Source: Author's representation of Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016

4.4.2 Selecting the schools

The sample of secondary schools within the two regions was carefully considered. The schools ethnic and socio-economic composition was considered as well as published data on attainment and destination. Finally, for the project to be successful, a sufficient level of support and engagement from school management and staff was essential. Three schools were approached (via email and in one case through twitter) and senior staff in two schools replied positively and agreed to discuss the research. Simultaneously, an application was made to each Local Authority for ethical clearance to conduct research in schools within the region (approval letters included in the Appendix C). This was followed by a face to face meeting with the Head Teachers in each school, where permission was granted to undertake qualitative research in the school.

Table 4-1 provides an overview of the summary characteristics of both schools. School 1 (always termed the 'Urban School' throughout this study) is a non-denominational school which serves the south west of the City of Edinburgh. Its roll is just over 500 pupils and it is located in a diverse inner-city community where up to 30 per cent of its pupils live in the most deprived datazones in Scotland. Scottish Qualification data reveal that in 2014/15, around 50 per cent of pupils achieve at least five Level 5 SCQF (equivalent to Standard Grades, GCSE). On average, 20 per cent of school-leavers move on to Higher Education. Table 4-7 summarises the key characteristics of the school and highlights the diversity within the school (more that 20 per cent of pupils are from minority groups).

School 2 (always termed the 'Rural School' throughout this study) is located in the second case study region of Angus. The school is located in small town and around 30 per cent of its pupils live in the most deprived datazones in Scotland. Scottish Qualification data reveal that in 2014/15, 50 per cent of pupils achieved at least five Level 5 SCQF (equivalent to Standard Grades, GCSE). Less than 40 per cent of students achieve at least three Level 6 SCQF (equivalent to Highers and A-Levels). On average, 24 per cent of school-leavers move on to Higher Education and the large proportion of students who live in the most deprived datazones in Scotland (25-30 per cent).

Table 4-7 Summary of school characteristics

Characteristics	School 1 'Urban School'	School 2 'Rural School'
Secondary roll	500	500
Urban/rural measure	Large urban areas	Accessible small towns
Local Authority	Edinburgh	Angus
Proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups	>20 %	10 - <20 %
Proportion of pupils who live in 20 per cent most deprived datazones in Scotland	25 - <30%	20 - <25 %
At least 5 Level 5 SCQF (Standard Grade, GCSE equivalent)	50%	50 %
At least 3 Level 6 SCQF (Highers, A-Level equivalent)	30%	40 %
Percentage of school leavers entering a positive destination	90	90
Percentage of school leavers in the most deprived quintiles	25%	n/a
Percentage progressing to Higher Education	10%	24 %

Source: Own analysis of Scottish Government Education data (accessed August 2016)

Throughout the discussions with education and school staff the research aims and expectations were clearly explained in order to ensure important ethical consideration was given to the potential impact this might have on participants. Once agreement had been given, two steps were taken. First, a rapport was developed in the school with staff and pupils to establish trust and mutual understanding. Second, a sample of senior students was selected to take part in the longitudinal research interview process. This incremental process was crucial to gaining respect and trust within the school, but also provided a depth to the semi-ethnographic enquiry.

4.4.3 Selecting the participants

As Madge et al. (2012) suggest, there are inherent challenges with drawing participants from within a closed environment such as a school, where participants may feel an obligation to take part and conform to certain norms. With this in mind, due consideration was given to the moral and ethical aspects of conducting research within a school. The process for gaining access to schools has been described above, however even once this was secured, there were still challenges

in creating a sample of students in both schools and ensuring that participants were genuinely given the choice to take part or not.

The research focuses on educational transition and would last just over twelve months, therefore there was a need to interview students of a range of ages. Students in S5 are usually turning 16 and undertaking their final year of compulsory education. It is also after completing S5 that many students leave, particularly those who have not gained the grades to stay on in S6 or those who do not anticipate attending Higher Education. However, a number of students from S6 were also interviewed to ensure at least some individuals in the sample would leave school during the research. A structured sampling technique was used to ensure the sample included pupils from a range of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds as well as a mix of academic abilities (see Appendix D for the sampling frame used in dialogue with teaching and pastoral staff).

As intimated above, there were several challenges with recruiting participants. As Cocks (2006) has suggested, whilst it is now broadly accepted that children have agency and should be involved in research, studies have often inadvertently excluded particular children from research, sometimes based on disability, competence and maturity. In a helpful methodological paper on conducting research with migrant children and young people, Sime (2017) highlights that negotiating access to migrant children can be particularly challenging and poses the risk of stigmatising migrants. Aware of these risks, I chose to take several practical steps in the research design to minimise the potential of stigmatising participants. Firstly, the sample deliberately did not consist only of pupils from migrant and minority backgrounds. Conceptually and methodologically, this approach allowed a diverse sample with potential to compare between and within ethnic/socio-economic groups. However, crucially it limited the risk of stigmatising pupils and creating a sample which was consciousness about ethnic identity from the outset. Secondly, when launching the research in schools there was no explicit mention of the dimensions of difference (class, geography and ethnic background) which drive the conceptualisation of the study. All participants were aware that the project was about outcomes and experiences of transition, but the role of migrant background and socio-economic differences were not raised.

The recruitment of pupils in both schools took time and involved extensive consultation with school staff. I was cognisant that school staff are also the gatekeepers in the school environment (Greene & Hogan, 2005). Teaching staff were given an opportunity to raise any specific needs, concerns, topics to be avoided with individual pupils (for example, students with asylum or refugee status may not be deemed by school staff as appropriate participants). In both schools, the sampling frame was explained and discussed, however on my initial visit to recruit pupils for the project, it seemed clear that staff were keen for certain students to participate, perhaps with an interest in showcasing some of the brightest pupils or, equally, in order to motivate other students who were less engaged in school. In the rural school, I raised this concern directly and new pupils were invited to hear more about the project. In the urban school, this led to a change in the approach to recruitment. I offered to attend an upcoming careers fayre with the whole year group which was short staffed. This experience helped to get to know a much broader cross section of students and ensured I was more proactive about inviting students who were not always recommended by staff.

Once a balanced sample of pupils had been agreed (approximately 20 in each school) I met with the pupils as a whole group to explain the project. The aims and expectations of the research were explained to students and flyers and information sheets were handed out to those who showed an interest in taking part in the research (see Appendix E for the material used). I then contacted the schools a week later to see what the response had been. All pupils consenting to participate in this research project were given opportunity to ask questions, discuss the project with family before consenting and were reminded that they were free to withdraw from the research at any stage. The final sample was formed with 18 pupils from the urban school and 16 pupils from the rural school 2 (n=34). See Table 4-8 for an overview of the characteristics of the sample.

Table 4-8 Summary characteristics of qualitative sample

Characteristics	Number of participants		
	Rural school	**Urban school**	**Total**
Gender			
Male	6	6	**12**
Female	10	12	**22**
Ethnicity			
White Scottish	6	10	**16**
White Other	7	2	**9**
Asian Scottish	0	4	**4**
Mixed Multiple Ethnic Group	1	2	**3**
White British	2	0	**2**
Parental occupation (NSEC5)			
1 - Higher managerial administrative and professional occupations	6	5	**11**
2 - Intermediate occupations	1	4	**5**
3 - Small employers and own account workers	1	3	**4**
4 - Semi-routine and routine occupations	7	3	**10**
5 - Lower supervisory and technical occupations	1	0	**1**
0 - Never worked and long-term unemployed	0	3	**3**
Actual/Expected initial destination (by end of fieldwork)			
Higher Education	10	19	**19**
Further Education	2	5	**7**
Apprenticeship	1	0	**1**
Employment	0	1	**1**
Gap Year	1	0	**1**
Unsure	2	0	**2**
N/A	0	3	**3**

Table 4-9 provides a detailed summary of the characteristics of each participant including the activities in which they took part. See the Appendix F for further details about the aspirations and plans of participants.

*Table 4-9 Detailed characteristics of all research participants**

	Pseudonym	Gender	School	Age at first interview	Parental occupation (NSSEC5**) (1 = highest)	Ethnicity	Born	Number of interviews	Participation in focus group
1	Akash	M	Urban	16	5	Asian Scottish	Scotland	3	Y
2	Ali	M	Urban	16	3	Asian Scottish	Netherlands	3	Y
3	Amelia	F	Urban	18	1	White Other	Lithuania	1	N
4	Ana	F	Rural	16	5	White Other	Poland	3	Y
5	Becky	F	Rural	16	3	White Scottish	Scotland	3	Y
6	Bonnie	F	Rural	16	5	White Scottish	Scotland	3	N
7	Corran	F	Urban	16	1	White Scottish	Scotland	3	Y
8	Craig	M	Rural	16	2	Mixed Multiple Ethnic Group	Scotland	3	N
9	Danielle	F	Urban	16	1	White Scottish	Scotland	3	Y
10	Eliza	F	Urban	16	2	White Scottish	Scotland	3	Y
11	Fabio	M	Urban	16	2	White Other	Brazil	2	N
12	Faye	F	Urban	16	1	White Scottish	Scotland	3	Y
13	Freya	F	Urban	16	2	White Scottish	Scotland	3	Y
14	Hamida	F	Urban	16	3	Asian Scottish	Bangladesh	1	N
15	Hope	F	Rural	16	1	White Scottish	Scotland	3	Y
16	Josh	M	Urban	16	3	Mixed Multiple Ethnic Group	Scotland	3	Y
17	Katie	F	Rural	16	1	White Scottish	Scotland	3	Y
18	Kerry	F	Urban	15	0	White Scottish	Scotland	1	N

19	Kieran	M	Rural	16	1	White British	Scotland	3	N
20	Kyle	M	Urban	15	0	White Scottish	Scotland	2	N
21	Leanne	F	Rural	16	1	White Scottish	Scotland	3	Y
22	Liam	M	Rural	16	5	White Scottish	Scotland	3	N
23	Lili	F	Rural	16	5	White Other	Hungary	3	Y
24	Lucas	M	Rural	17	5	White Other	US	3	N
25	Ludmila	F	Rural	16	5	White Other	Poland	3	Y
26	Lynn	F	Rural	16	1	White British	England	3	Y
27	Maya	F	Urban	16	5	White Scottish	Scotland	3	Y
28	Meena	F	Urban	16	1	Mixed Multiple Ethnic Group	Scotland	3	Y
29	Michael	M	Rural	16	1	White Scottish	US	3	N
30	Piotr	M	Rural	17	5	White Other	Poland	3	N
31	Reyna	F	Urban	16	5	Asian Scottish	Philippines	3	Y
32	Samantha	F	Urban	16	2	White Scottish	Scotland	3	Y
33	Sasha	F	Rural	18	4	White Other	Russian	3	N
34	Thomas	M	Urban	16	0	White Scottish	Scotland	1	N

**Note These data have been collected during the course of the qualitative research phase, in consultation with participants.*

***Parental occupation (NSSEC5) categories are 1 - Higher managerial administrative and professional occupations, 2 - Intermediate occupations, 3 - Small employers and own account workers, 4 - Semi-routine and routine occupations, 5 - Lower supervisory and technical occupations, 0 - Never worked and long-term unemployed*

4.4.4 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations were critical when developing the research design for this study with school-aged participants. Ethical Approval, Forms and Risk Assessment Records were completed and approved by the University in the first instance. Next, consideration was given to the principle of informed consent, which has been discussed widely in the literature on qualitative research with young people (Cocks, 2006; Sime, 2017) As such, interviewees were informed verbally and in writing via a Research Consent Form (see Appendix G) of the nature of the research, so that they could make a fully informed choice about whether or not they consented to participation.

Another ethical consideration was the use of personal storytelling. This can be an evocative research tool and the risks of this approach were carefully considered. Practical steps were taken, such as explaining what would be involved in each interview at the outset of the study and reiterating that participation was optional and could be terminated at any stage. In addition, I conducted each interview in accessible rooms in busy corridors and positioned the participant nearest the door during interviews. Throughout each interview, participants were reminded that they could 'pass' on any questions or activities with which they were uncomfortable.

One of the main considerations in school-based research is the positionality of the researcher (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013). As discussed above (section 4.2.2) the methodological approach was developed with specific attention to structural power dynamics. I was cognisant of my position as an adult, non-migrant, educated female and how this could be perceived and permeate the balance of power with participants who might be migrant, non-adult, less educated and male. These asymmetrical power dynamics were an important ethical consideration. The use of multiple forms of qualitative data collection (photos, timelines, focus group activities) was deliberate to design this imbalance of power. It allowed participants to have some ownership over the process. For example, some pupils brought along a photo to the first interview which helped initiate discussion around their current interests and priorities, these images of family, friends or a recent holiday provided a starting point for the interview and allowed participants to build confidence in sharing their views rather simply responding to a ridged interview

schedule about an unfamiliar topic. The semi-structured nature of the interviews also allowed flexibility and freedom for the participants to shape the flow of the interview.

Within the focus groups, each activity was carefully designed to ensure participants were not singled out or forced to provide a response. There was a deliberate progression in the activities; starting with writing anonymously on post-it notes, to a collective team building exercise (Tubing Challenge) and moving gradually into the group discussion of the statistical data. This gradual shift allowed individuals to become accustomed to the group environment (having only had one to one interviews with me before this). It allowed participants to develop confidence before being quizzed about potentially intimidating graphs and statistics. The final interview was also sensitive to the ethical question of how I should retain contact with participants after they have left school. I set up a 'Transition Project' twitter account and provided an email address for pupils to get in touch which some have used. By the final interview, all the participants had provided non-school email addresses and signed consent forms to say they would be willing to be contacted even once they had left school. On the few occasions, students were unresponsive to my emails, I sent a follow-up email a few weeks later to remind them to get in touch and after this, I did not attempt further contact. Further reflection on the ethical challenges and how these were overcome are discussed in the Discussion Chapter (Section 8.4.2).

4.4.5 Repeat interviews

The process of conducting repeat research interviews has been termed longitudinal qualitative research (Neale, 2018). It can be understood as a series of complex social encounters in which listening and responding to participants is just as important as asking questions (Valentine, Sporton & Nielsen, 2009). The complexity of conducting repeat interviews required a detailed field diary as well as the transcripts from each interview. Reflexivity was a significant aspect of the research process given the power-laden nature of this type of research (Valentine, 2003). Issues of positionality are particularly important within research in schools and given my background as a teacher in Scottish schools. This experience proved important to building a rapport with staff in the school but was not discussed with participants as it may have jeopardised trust and neutrality.

A combination of interviews and focus groups was used in this research. The longitudinal methodology transformed understandings of the lived experiences of transition from those that would have been garnered from one off interviews. It allowed a rapport to be developed with participants, and gradually many young people felt comfortable discussing issues such as identity and belonging and experiences of integration and exclusion. The semi structured interviews allowed for wide ranging discussion and debate on these topics and young people were able to indirectly (as well as directly at times) engage with the idea that they variously construct, assert and resist their migrant or minority identity. For an overview of the longitudinal qualitative rese$f$94arch undertaken in both schools, see Table 4-10. It highlights four waves to the research which took place between September 2016 and October 2017.

Table 4-10 Qualitative Research Overview

Wave	Topic covered	Purpose	Timescale
Wave 1	Visual timeline of life events to date Discuss project aims Set agenda for next time we meet	Historical storytelling	Sept/Oct 2016
Wave 2	Life at present School / Home / Interests / Perceptions of the UK / othering / identity / transition Life in the future Focus on the short term aims / opportunities / plans	Exploring experiences, motivations and aspirations	Jan/Feb 2017
Wave 3	Life at present Update on School/academics Other topics led by pupil Life in the future Update on plans / focus on the longer term aims / opportunities Other themes led by participant	Exploring the idea of change, transition and making plans	April/May 2017
Wave 4	Final interview Reflection on school / results / steps after school. Clarifying short/medium/longer term plans Reflection on the research process Other themes led by participant	Reflection of transition	Sept/Oct 2017

In total, 92 in-depth interviews were conducted during the research phase, which each lasted between 14 and 40 minutes in length and took place within class time and on school premises. Attrition is always a risk with repeat interviews, particularly during a dynamic period such as finishing compulsory education. All 34 participants completed interview 1, 30 participants completed interviews 1 and 2 and 28 participants completed all three waves. Each interview was semi-structured in nature and each wave had a slightly different focus (see Table 4-10). See Appendix H, I and J for examples of the materials used in each interview session. The first interview included a timeline activity (see Figure 4-4). Scholars have suggested that this process of graphic elicitation may encourage contributions from interviewees that are difficult to obtain by other means and can provide a complementary addition to conventional interview stimuli (Crilly, Blackwell & Clarkson, 2006). Bagnoli (2009) also reports using timeline activities within a project on migration and identity which proved useful to discuss the past as well as discuss the future. In this case, the timeline activity created a focus for the first interview and was used as a springboard for wider exploration of the background of participants as well as their experiences of educational transition. The final

interview incorporated a sorting exercise which allowed students to discuss the key influences on their lives. This is a challenging topic and careful thought was given as to how to structure and support the response. Ultimately, this sorting activity allowed students to prioritise their influences, fourteen options were provided with several blank cards. At the end of the interview, I took a photo of the card arrangement and used this in conjunction with the interview transcripts. The exercise gave a starting point for discussion, and analyses of the third interviews revealed that this exercise provided a vehicle for expanding and developing complex ideas around agency, structure, personal motivation and natural talent/ability.

Figure 4-4 Example of in-depth interview

Source: reconstruction of interview 1, photos taken with permission

Figure 4-5 Example of timeline activity

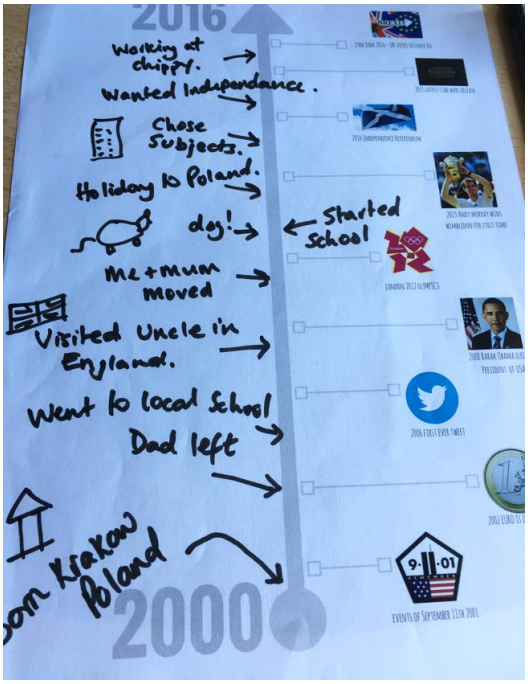
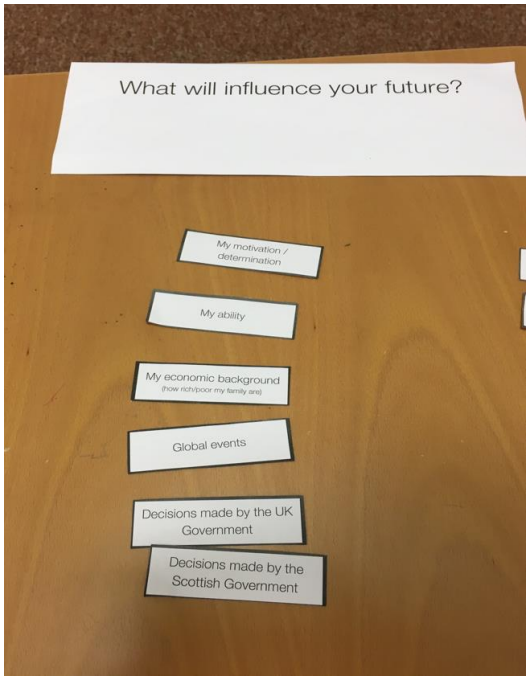


Figure 4-6 Example of sorting activity



4.4.6 The Focus groups

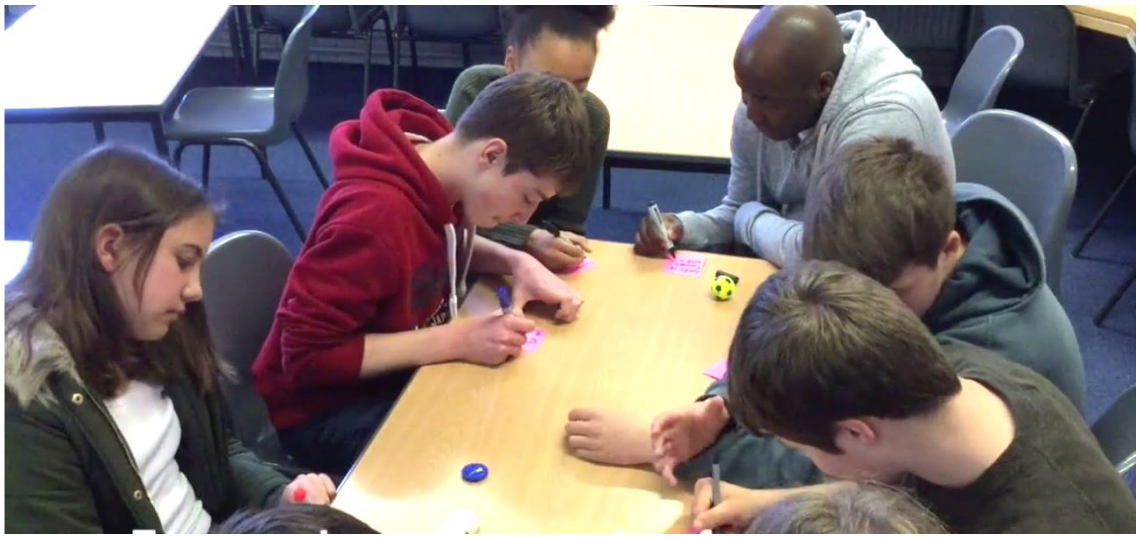
The two focus groups (one in each school) were held in June 2017 and all project participants were invited to attend. The timing of the focus group, at the end of the school year, meant some pupils had already left school (S6 students, for example) and others were involved with school trips and placements on the day. Therefore, twenty participants in total took part in the focus groups (School 1, n=12. School 2 n=8) and the focus group was also skewed by gender (female, n=17, male, n=3).

The value of bringing young people together in a focus group has been demonstrated through a range of literature already reviewed in this study (Fuligni & Tseng, 2017; Tyrrell et al., 2018). These opportunities can unlock hidden meaning, corroborate findings from interviews and be a forum for testing hypotheses. In this research, the focus group took place after the first two interviews and therefore it was used to test ideas which had emerged through one to one interviews, specifically the notion of positive destinations, mechanisms for managing change and the role of social networks. Careful thought and planning went into the design of the focus group which was confined by time (the length of a lesson), space (a classroom) and resource (one researcher).

Several steps were taken in order to maximise the opportunity. First, a number of activities were planned, and some discussion took place in smaller groups to ensure all topics were covered. Second, video recording equipment was used (with participant consent) to capture many of the non-verbal cues which took place during the focus group. Thirdly, information was gathered in several ways including through group discussion, drama, post it notes and a game. These activities were shaped and inspired by the use of innovative methods in other contexts (Kesby, 2000, 2007; Van Blerk & Kesby, 2013). However they could not be described as participative, as the process was not co-produced. Throughout the focus group I sought to bridge the gap between the researcher and the researched, being reflexive and allowing the session to be shaped by the participants as far as possible.

The focus groups involved three key activities, the resources for these are included in Appendix K. The first was a tubing challenge which invited participants to visualise educational transition. All participants were split into three groups, the first group was given a selection of drainpipes, the second received other pipes which were L-shaped and U-shaped and the final group were given a bucket. The group was shown a golf ball and asked to imagine this was a school pupil and the bucket was 'success'. I explained that in ten minutes we would try to attempt one individual journey of educational transition, we would move the golf ball from one side of the room to the other using the drainpipes and aim to get the ball in the bucket. Each small group had a stack of post it notes and were asked to discuss and write down what they imagined their pieces of equipment represented. Group 1 - discussing supports/encouragements you need (post it notes of pieces of 1m guttering) Group 2 – discussing barriers and challenges (post it notes on awkward shaped bits of tubing) Group 3 – discussing what success is (post it notes on the bucket). After these ideas were generated in small groups, a general discussion took place about educational transition. All participants had already had an opportunity to think about an aspect of this (what is success? what supports transition? what makes it more challenging?). As a result, the discussion flowed and participants discussed their ideas together with very little input required from me. Finally, there was an opportunity to work together and attempt the challenge (getting the ball into the bucket using only the drainpipes). In both schools, this took a few attempts, but the impact of the group achieving the activity appeared to gel the group and prepare them for the next activity. For a summary of the feedback from the post it notes gathered through this exercise, see Appendix L.

Figure 4-7 Generating ideas about success within the Tubing Challenge, Focus Group



Source: reconstruction of focus group, photos taken with permission

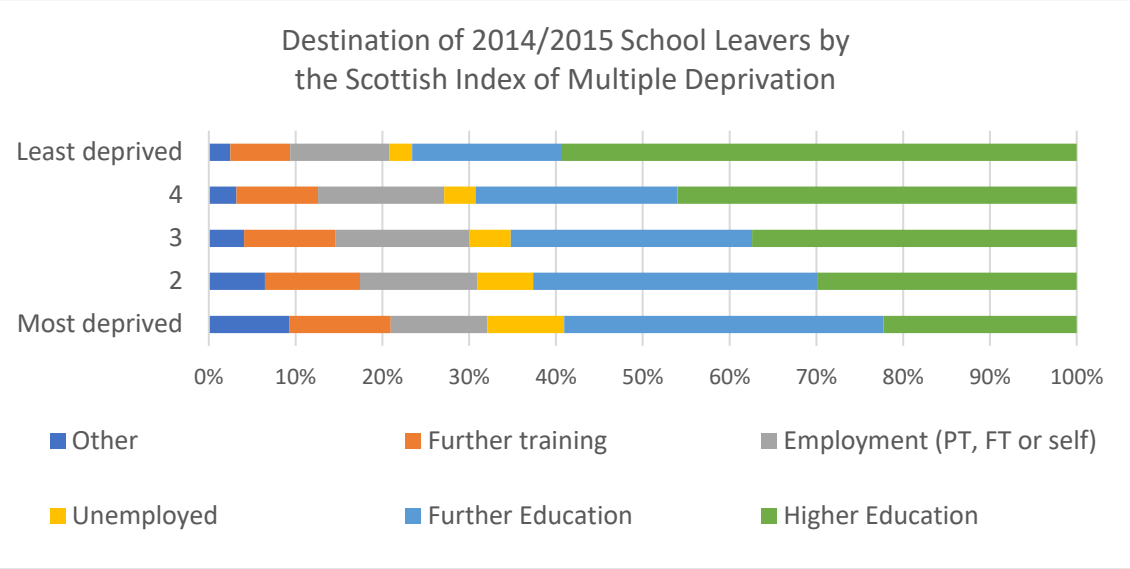
Figure 4-8 Testing out transition - Tubing challenge, Focus Group

Source: reconstruction of focus group, photos taken with permission

The next activity in the focus group was an opportunity to present the early outputs of my quantitative findings to the participants. Four bar graphs were shown to the participants, they were presented with information on destination by gender,

geography, deprivation and ethnicity. Students were asked three questions about each graph (see Appendix K): What is the graph saying? Is this what you expect? Does this matter? I gave no comments as the graph was handed out, but asked participants to share their thoughts and first impressions. This interaction between both methods was a highlight of the research phase; the graphs created far more interest and debate than I had anticipated.

Figure 4-9 An example of a graph which was distributed during the Focus Group



Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish School Leavers Survey (discussed in Chapter 5)

The final activity in the Focus Group was called a Decision Alley exercise. The participants split randomly into two groups for a debate with another volunteer not joining either group. The groups formed two lines which faced each other with one person, the decision-maker, in the centre of the 'alley'. I read out a statement, 'All young people in Scotland have an equal chance of success in school' and one group had to persuade the decision-maker to move forward (towards for) or move backwards (towards against). This activity resonated with students, arousing passionate debate. The exercise was filmed, and analysis of these visual data revealed that the most vocal contributors had often been quiet in other activities. The freedom to debate, at times arguing against their own personal views, allowed new perspectives to be introduced. The added value came in the discussion after

these exercises, where the conversation deepened, and participants were more engaged with the complexity of the issues.

Figure 4-10 Decision Alley exercise, splitting participants into two groups

The focus group provided a vital opportunity to test ideas and meet with all participants in a single session. It is important to note that practical steps were taken to ensure such innovative methods did not cause undue anxiety or uncertainty for participants. A level of trust had been established during the two interviews and participants were familiar with one another. However, the exercise did raise some methodological reflections which will be discussed in Chapter 8.

In addition to the research interviews and focus groups, there were events and activities which took place over the school year which provided opportunities to gather more field notes and engage in informal participant observation. Joining careers workshops, supporting fieldtrips and after school activities also contributed to my fieldwork and these observations were recorded in a research diary.

4.4.7 Approach to the analysis

The process of analysing multiple forms of data was a significant consideration in the research design and evolved as the research progressed. After each interview there was opportunity to re-examine the approach and amend the interview schedule and hone the questions. The complex task of data analysis was conducted throughout the research phase and inevitably, involved multiple steps (summarised below in Figure 4-11).

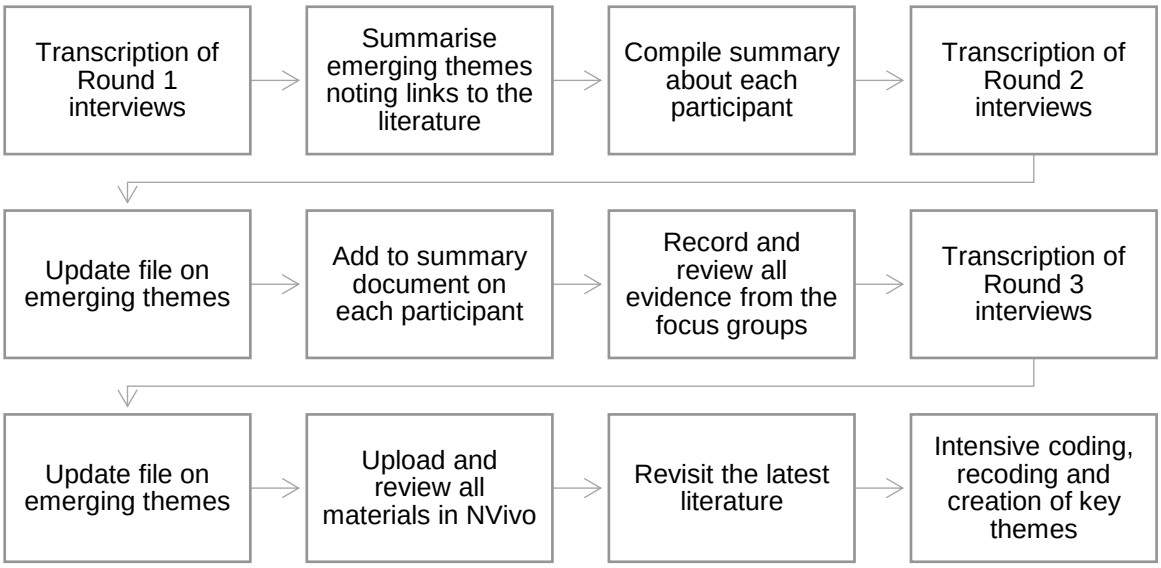
Each interview was recorded using a digital dictaphone and transcribed into Microsoft Word. The process of listening to the audio files multiple times and

transcribing the interviews personally played an important part in the analysis of the first two interviews. Given the number of participants, I opted to transcribe all interviews from one school first, keeping a file of emerging themes, key questions and overarching themes and then repeated the step for the second school. At this stage I also reflected on the interview schedule itself and identified topics which required further follow up in the next interview. For each participant I produced a one page summary document of key themes, phrases and questions to pursue in the next interview. These summaries provided an aide memoir and also formed the first of several stages in the analysis. Once all the Wave 1 interviews had been transcribed they were uploaded to the software package NVivo. Using the software I organised the transcripts and added demographic data for each participant (age, gender, ethnicity, geography, school) and explored the first round interviews using the word frequency tool, creating further notes and adding to my summary of emerging themes. A similar process was carried out after each wave of the research. For the final round of interviews professional transcription services were used due to limitations of time. Although this was not in the original research design, the process of preparing the audio files for professional transcription was unexpectedly helpful and created space to listen to the interview multiple times without also transcribing it myself. Once all the transcripts were completed and the material from the focus groups was collated, these elements were uploaded to NVivo. These data including typed-up post it notes, video material, photos, research diary entries, emails from participants and all 92 in depth interview transcripts. The software NVivo is ideally suited for the analysis of text, audio, video, and image data, including interviews and focus groups, making it ideal for the mix of methods that had been used in this research.

Once all the material had been uploaded I revisited the literature, referring to material on educational transitions in general as well as specific themes which had emerged around identity and belonging. It was only at this stage that I began to re-read all the interviews and cross reference themes across the all the research material. This was a complex task which I tried to complete with as few disruptions as possible. This allowed me to remain immersed in the data and retain consistency with the analysis. Over the course of a week I reviewed all the data, identifying more than seventy common themes (such as ‘feeling torn’ or ‘integration’ or ‘relationships’). These themes (called nodes in NVivo) were then grouped into broader categories (plan making, experiences of migration,

reflections on transition). Finally, these categories were organised in to four main themes.

Figure 4-11 Steps in the analysis



The four themes to emerge from the research, in parallel with the literature, were: aspirations for the future, evolving identities, experiences of transition and key influences. **Error! Not a valid bookmark self-reference.** provides a summary of these themes, identifying how many different sources they were found in and how many times they were referred to. For the full coding tree, see Appendix M.

Table 4-11 Summary of coding tree, compiled using NVivo

Coded	Sources	References
1. Aspirations for the future	86	260
2. Evolving identities	38	64
3. Experiences of transition	23	34
4. Key influences	81	311

In conclusion, this section on the qualitative strand of the research has highlighted the choice of methods, sites and participants as well as how these data has been analysed. The research design creates rich longitudinal research which explore

the experiences, motivations and aspirations of young people from a range of backgrounds in two local contexts. The rationale for the qualitative perspective was to address each of the research questions, identifying how the outcomes and experiences of young people are shaped on the transition to adulthood. This section has given the rationale for adopting a case study area approach in two contrasting areas of Angus and Edinburgh. The tools which have been described have sought to innovatively provide first-hand insights that complement the use of quantitative approaches described in section 4.2.

4.5 Conclusions

This chapter has set out the research design for this project. It has explained the broad methodological approach including the reason for adopting mixed methods using the philosophical framework of critical realism. The innovative linkage of two administrative datasets provides detailed data on the outcomes of school leavers as well as important determinants of educational success. The Scottish School Census and the School Leavers Survey also offer a powerful tool with which to examine ethnic differences in educational outcomes benefiting from the large sample size.

Innovative longitudinal qualitative field work complements the quantitative analysis. The approach has been described in detail, including the sample, the ethics and the individual activities which form the qualitative research. In-depth interviews produce biographical details and a sense of how aspirations change over time, whilst the focus groups bring together some of these findings and tests several key ideas. This mixed methods approach, involving both quantitative and qualitative techniques is designed to provide an insight into the national trends, local nuances and personal experiences of educational transitions and trajectories.

The research design is critical to unlocking understanding of educational transition. In summary, the quantitative and qualitative strands of the research were designed to complement each other and offer a fuller picture of the experiences and outcomes of school leavers. It sets out not merely to allow analysis at different scales (from the national to the individual), but also to bring contrasting epistemological approaches, allowing fresh conceptualisation of the topic of educational inequalities. The three empirical chapters now draw together the findings which address the three substantive research questions which form the basis of this study. 1) What factors influence the outcomes of school leavers in Scotland? 2) How does migrant and minority background shape experiences of educational transition? and 3) How do ethnicity, social class and geography intersect to create distinct pathways for young people from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds?

Chapter 5 Redefining success: what shapes the outcomes of educational transition?

5.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to document and explain the factors which influence the educational outcomes of school leavers in Scotland. It investigates the destinations of school leavers and draws on both qualitative and quantitative evidence to reveal the differences in destination by socio-economic and migrant background. Statistical analysis is used to assess whether these differences can be accounted for by individual, school-level and regional factors. Examination of longitudinal qualitative analysis reveals how definitions of success vary between school leavers and can change throughout the course of school transition. It also raises questions about how success is defined and measured.

The chapter begins by reviewing the context for examining educational outcomes and sets the Scottish context by discussing the approach to measuring success and recording positive destinations. Next, using descriptive statistics and logistic regression analysis, the chapter highlights the outcomes of different ethnic groups. Finally, the chapter reveals complex and competing ideas of success among school leavers, focusing specifically on young people with a migrant background.

5.1.1 Measuring educational success

Education remains one of the strongest determinants of social inequalities across the life course (Ashurst & Venn, 2014; Barnard, 2017; Wickham, Anwar, Barr, Law, & Taylor-Robinson, 2016). The evidence reviewed so far in this thesis has demonstrated that education levels are an important predictor of future employment, wages and poverty rates (Barnard, 2017; Hirsch, 2007). However, the literature has also highlighted competing discourses on the role of education in addressing underlying inequalities in society. Dorling and colleagues contend that

education systems have been used as a tool to reproduce and embed inequalities (Dorling, 2015; Gamoran & Bruch, 2017; Reay, 2012). They argue that the increasing influence of neoliberal ideas in education have shifted the focus away from the structural causes of inequality towards a language of competition, choice and measurable success (Ball, 2017; Dorling, 2015). It is these debates, around the measurement of educational outcomes and cultures of performance which form an important backdrop to this chapter which examines the outcomes of school leavers and perceptions of success by young people from different socio-economic, geographic and ethnic backgrounds.

Within the Scottish context, the measurement of success has been at the heart of discussions about the new national curriculum – Curriculum for Excellence, which was first introduced in 2011. The reforms have reignited debates about the role of education in addressing inequalities within society (Bell & Eiser, 2015; Sosu & Ellis, 2014) and prompted some scholars to recommend revisiting fundamental questions such as the purpose of education, the content of the curriculum and ultimately how to measure academic achievement (Biesta, 2017; Priestley et al., 2012). The SNP-led government in Scotland has made education a central priority and have placed 'successful transitions' at the heart of this strategy.

> We must … continue to break down barriers beyond school to help our young people succeed. Through reforms to university access, the learner journey and student support we can help our young people through some of the most exciting, and stressful, transitions of their lives. (Scottish Government, 2017b; 13)

These policy statements demonstrate a commitment to using education as a vehicle for reducing inequality in society, as discussed earlier (chapter 2 – educational philosophies). However, the policy has also been criticised for failing to acknowledge the underlying causes of disadvantage (McCluskey, 2017). In addition, there are concerns about how the success (or otherwise) of these reforms will be assessed and evaluated (Mowat, 2018). For over a decade, the National Performance Framework has formed the main tool which successive Scottish governments have used to measure their own performance. The Framework consists of 66 indicators against which the government measures itself and these include social, environmental and economic targets. The 'destination of school leavers' remains one of the indicators and illustrates the government's approach to measurement and the language of positive destinations which has been

discussed extensively in the review of literature. In the most recent publication, the government announced it was either 'improving' or 'maintaining' across 55 of the 66 indicators. This included targets for the destinations of school leavers, where the latest statement on positive destinations states –

> The percentage of young people in learning, training or work is increasing – in 2015-16, 92% of school leavers from publicly funded schools were in positive and sustained destinations, compared to 87% in 2007-08. (Scottish Government, 2017b; 35)

It is in this context that this empirical chapter sets out to improve understanding of the current trends in initial school leaver destinations in Scotland; disaggregating the components which make up a 'positive destination' and linking these destination data with the Scottish School Census to interrogate these figures more closely. As outlined earlier in the thesis, the research question will be addressed using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. This mixed methods approach is not merely designed to allow analysis at different scales (from the national to the individual) but also to bring contrasting epistemological approaches, allowing fresh conceptualisation of a familiar question. Therefore, this chapter interweaves findings from the quantitative analysis with qualitative research and provides an interface between them as participants discuss these data; adding narratives to these trends using innovative longitudinal qualitative research with school leavers.

5.1.2 Measuring success using school leaver destinations

Currently, educational outcomes in Scotland are measured in two main ways. First, by *qualifications* recording the level and number of qualifications gained by a student (published annually by the Scottish Qualifications Authority). Secondly, by *destination* which records what activity a young person is involved in several months after leaving school (published annually by Skills Development Scotland). As outlined in the methods chapter, this study focuses on the second measure, examining the destinations of school leavers.

As outlined in the previous chapter (Section 4.3), the analysis which follows focusses on school leavers (n=257,167) who left publicly-funded secondary schools in Scotland between 2012 and 2016. A school leaver is a young person in the senior phase of school (S4-S6) who left school during the school year, where the school year is taken to run from school census day one year (usually late September) to school census day the following year. The analysis in this chapter uses Follow Up Destinations (rather than the Initial Destination) of school leavers as this represents the most up to date information available on each individual. A more detailed explanation of the Scottish School Leavers Survey is found in the previous chapter.

Table 5-1 provides an overview of the destinations of school leavers in Scotland between 2012-2016. It shows that the most common post-school destination is Higher Education (37 per cent), followed by Employment Training and Work (30 per cent), Further Education (24 per cent) and Other (9 per cent). The table also provides the breakdown of each category, highlighting that most leavers within the 'Employment Training and Voluntary Work' category in this time period were 'Employed' (26 per cent). It also reveals the composition of the 'Other' category, which is composed of more than 17,000 school leavers who are unemployed and seeking employment. For a breakdown of the destinations of school leavers in each school year, see reference to the published data discussed in detail in the Literature Review (section 2.2.1).

Table 5-1: Destinations of school leavers in Scotland 2012-2016 including detailed breakdown of figures for types of employment, training, voluntary work and 'other'

	Destination	N		%
1	Higher Education	95,181		37.0
2	Employment, Training and Voluntary work	77,158		30.0
	Employed	*67,083*	*26.1*	
	Training	*6,940*	*2.7*	
	Activity Agreement	*1,978*	*0.8*	
	Voluntary Work	*1,157*	*0.4*	
3	Further Education	61,231		23.8
4	Other	23,597		9.2
	Unemployed Not Seeking	*4,288*	*1.7*	
	Unemployed Seeking	*17,163*	*6.7*	
	Excluded	*740*	*0.3*	
	Unknown	*1,406*	*0.5*	
	Total	**257,167**		**100**

Source: Author's own analysis of Follow Up Destinations using Scottish School Leavers Survey

5.1.3 Examining variation in where school leavers go next

Three questions drive the quantitative analysis below. Firstly, are there differences between ethnic groups in post-school destination? Secondly, can these differences be explained by the individual characteristics of school leavers? Finally, are the ethnic differences accounted for by individual, school and regional characteristics? In the sections which follow, descriptive statistics address the first question providing an overview of ethnic differences in destination. Next, multinomial logistic regression is used to estimate the probability of school leavers going to one of four possible destinations addressing the second question. Finally, four logistic regression models are fitted, using a stepwise approach, to explore the answer to the third question which asks whether these ethnic differences can be explained by characteristics at a range of scales.

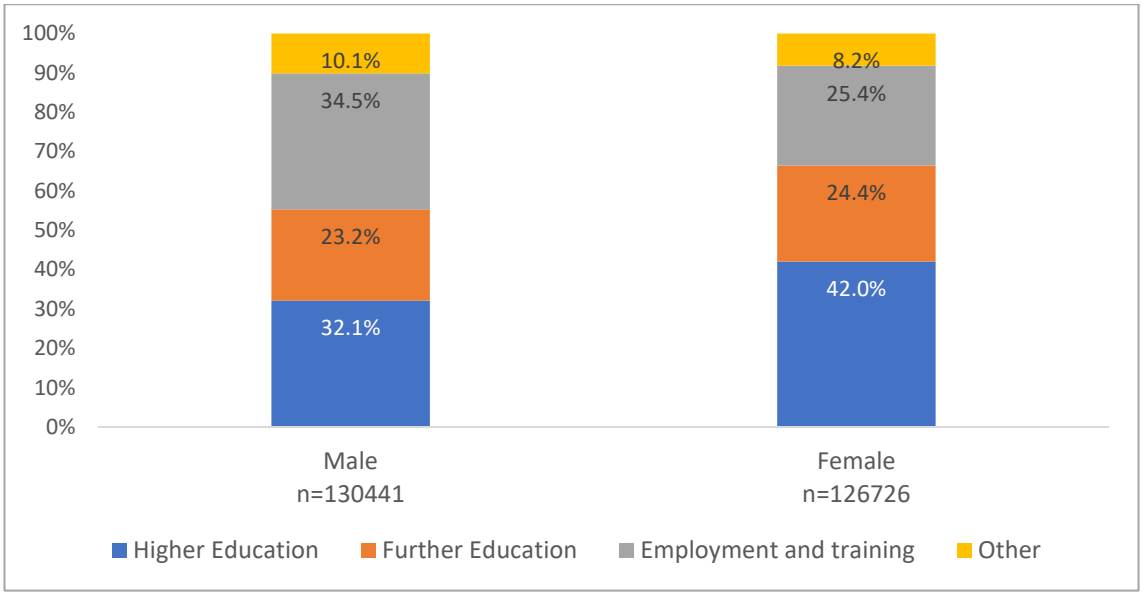
5.1.4 Destinations by gender, deprivation and geography

Figure 5-1, Figure 5-2 and Figure 5-3 below present the destinations of school leavers by gender, deprivation and geography. Figure 5-1 shows that ten per cent

more females are leaving school and going to Higher Education than males. Fractionally more females are also going on to Further Education (1 per cent). However, more males entered employment or training in this period than females (9 per cent more). Figure 5-2 reveals a stark socio-economic gradient in the destination of school leavers. The greater the level of area deprivation, the lower the attendance of Higher Education after leaving school. Nearly three times as many school leavers living in the least deprived datazones attend university after leaving school compared with school leavers from the most deprived areas. A greater proportion of school leavers from the most deprived areas go to Further Education and Employment and Training than leavers living in the most affluent two quintiles. This finding is well supported in the literature and has been the focus of extensive public policy and innovation, as discussed in Chapter 2.

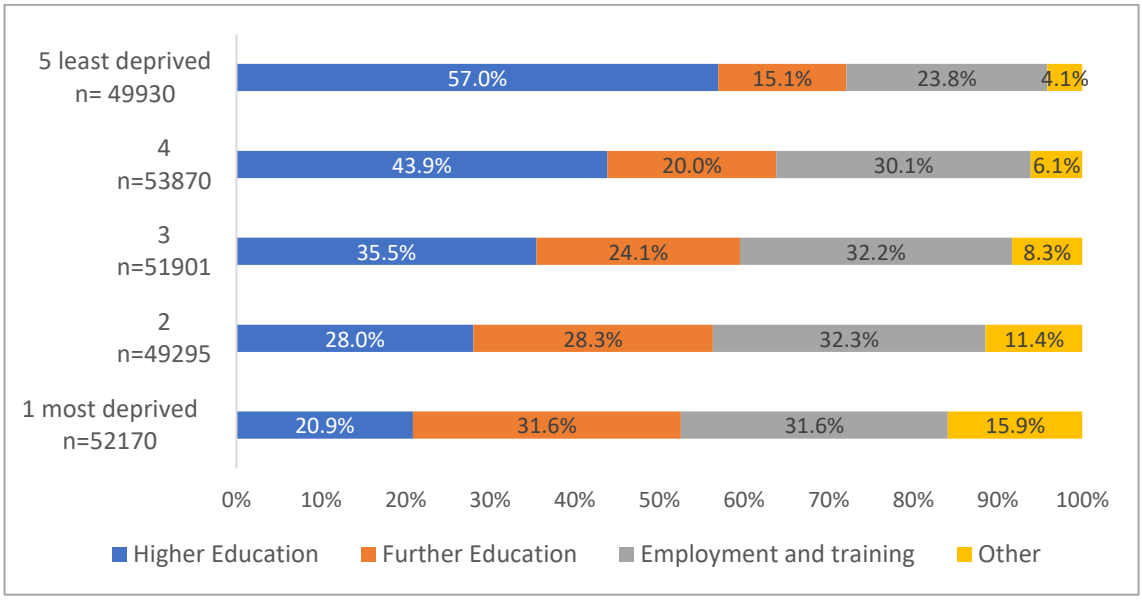
Figure 5-3 highlights the spatial distribution of school leaver destinations. Although no strong spatial patterns emerge, it is interesting to note that entry to Higher Education is highest among pupils living in accessible rural areas (40.2 per cent) and lowest in Remote Small towns (31.6 per cent). However, broadly, progression to Higher Education appears consistent across all geographical areas. The figure also shows that a higher proportion of school leavers from remote rural locations moved into employment and training (36.8 per cent) compared with school leavers in large urban areas (28.4 per cent) where it has may be reasoned that there is greater access to university education opportunities.

Figure 5-1 Follow up destination of school leavers by gender, 2012-2016



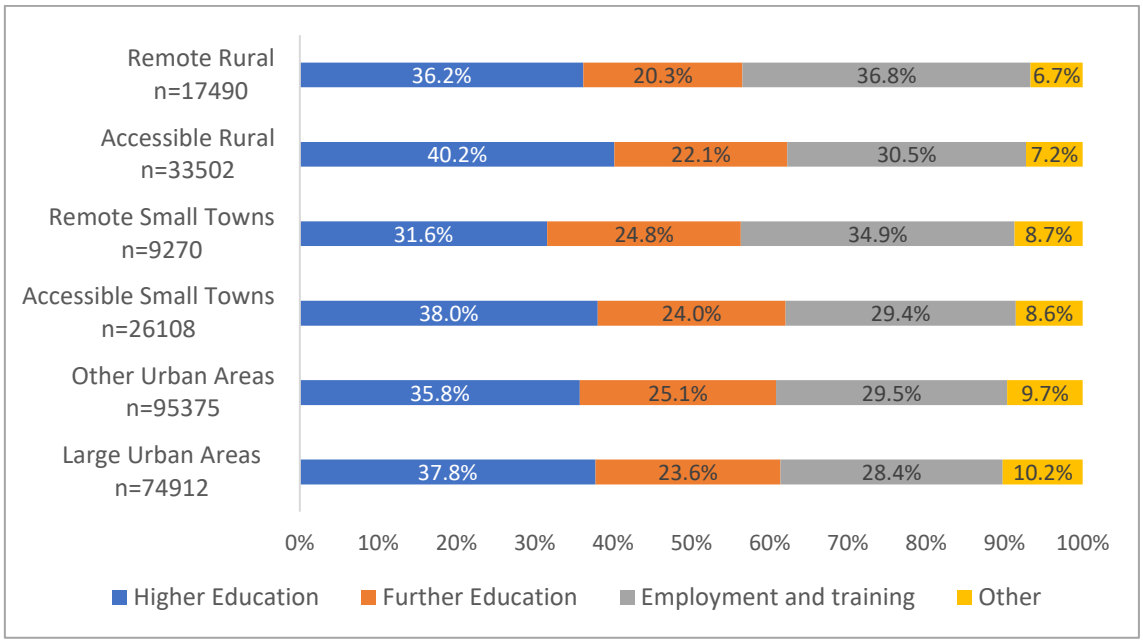
Pearson Chi-Square: 3813.811 (p<0.001)
Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish School Leavers Survey

Figure 5-2 Follow up destination of school leavers by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), 2012-2016



Pearson Chi-Square: 20189.093 (p<0.001)
Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish School Leavers Survey

Figure 5-3 Follow up destination of school leavers by urban/rural geography of pupils' home address, 2012-2016

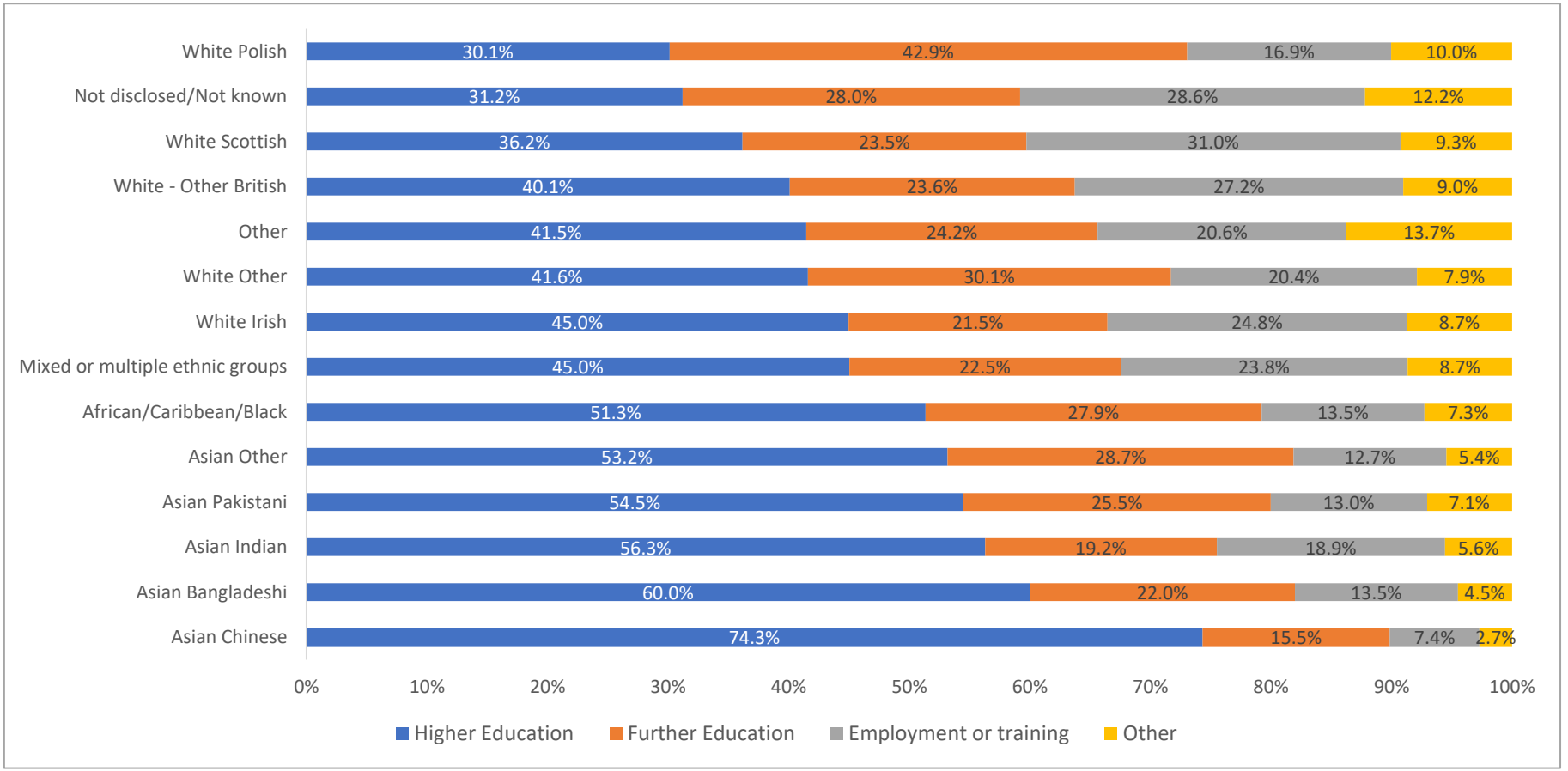


Pearson Chi-Square: 1232.067 (p<0.001)
Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish School Leavers Survey

5.2 Destinations by ethnicity

Having reviewed the patterns in destinations by gender, deprivation and geography, the analysis now narrows in focus, addressing the question of ethnic differences in school leaver destinations. Figure 5-4 and Table 5-2 both present the post-school destinations by ethnicity. They reveal the high proportion of Asian Chinese pupils who leave school and go on to Higher Education (74.3 per cent); this is more than twice the proportion for White Scottish (36.2 per cent). Higher Education is also the most common destination for all five of the Asian ethnic groups (Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani and Asian Other) and pupils from an African/Caribbean/Black background. Further Education includes leavers undertaking full-time education which is not higher education. The ethnic group most likely to attend Further Education are White Polish pupils (42.9 per cent) and White Other (30.1 per cent). Less than a quarter of Asian Chinese, Indian or Bangladeshi school leavers went on to Further Education. Several ethnic groups were more likely to go on to Employment and Training than Further Education including White Scottish, Other British and Irish and those school leavers from mixed or multiple ethnic groups.

Figure 5-4 Follow up destination of school leavers by ethnicity, 2012-2016



Pearson Chi-Square: 2681.919 (p<0.001)
Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish School Leavers Survey

Table 5-2 Post-school destination by ethnicity, percent of ethnic group (2012-2016) (ordered by percent in HE, descending)

Ethnicity	Higher Education	Further Education	Employment or training	Other	Number of pupils
Asian Chinese	74.3	15.5	7.4	2.7	888
Asian Bangladeshi	60.0	22.0	13.5	4.5	200
Asian Indian	56.3	19.2	18.9	5.6	1025
Asian Pakistani	54.5	25.5	13.0	7.1	3558
Asian Other	53.2	28.7	12.7	5.4	993
African/Caribbean/Black	51.3	27.9	13.5	7.3	1266
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	45.0	22.5	23.8	8.7	2125
White Irish	45.0	21.5	24.8	8.7	149
White Other	41.6	30.1	20.4	7.9	4812
Other	41.5	24.2	20.6	13.7	931
White - Other British	40.1	23.6	27.2	9.0	6259
White Scottish	36.2	23.5	31.0	9.3	231127
Not disclosed/Not known	31.2	28.0	28.6	12.2	2828
White Polish	30.1	42.9	16.9	10.0	1006
Total	*44.3*	*25.8*	*19.2*	*10.7*	*257167*

Pearson Chi-Square: 2681.919 (p<0.001)
Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish School Leavers Survey 2012-2016

These results are striking, but not unexpected. The large proportion of Chinese leavers entering Higher Education is consistent with the existing literature (Mok & Platt, 2018). There is also extensive theoretical and empirical research which explores the relatively high proportion of other Asian groups (Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani) entering Higher Education after school. Overall, the patterns are also consistent with research on the outcomes of school leavers in England and Wales (Dorling, 2015) with African/Caribbean/Black groups as a notable exception. This may be explained by the smaller size of this group in Scotland and its composition, which will be explored more below. Having addressed question one which asks whether there are differences in destination by ethnic groups, the next step is to examine the characteristics of each ethnic group in order to understand whether individual and school level factors can explain these differences.

5.2.1 Exploring differences in destinations

Table 5-3 presents a summary of the characteristics of each ethnic group and highlights the significant differences between groups which may, in turn, explain the ethnic differences in destination. For example, Table 5-3 shows that certain

ethnic groups are over represented in areas of multiple deprivation: more than half of African, Caribbean/Black pupils (53.2 per cent) and a large proportion of White Polish pupils (46.9 per cent) live in the most deprived datazones in Scotland. In contrast, 8 per cent of White Other British pupils and 16.8 per cent of Asian Chinese pupils lived in these areas. The table reveals that uptake of free school meals (a proxy for low income) is low among certain groups including Asian Chinese (4.5 per cent) and White Polish pupils (4.8 per cent). The variable national identity reveals that many ethnic groups identify as either Scottish, British or another UK national identity. In combination with the Level of English variable, this may act as a crude indication of how long an individual may have lived in the UK (Esser, 2006). Table 5-2 shows that a high proportion of Asian groups have a UK identity, including Asian Pakistani (84.1 per cent) Asian Bangladesh (75 per cent) Asian Indian (70.9 per cent) and Asian Chinese (72 per cent). However, the Asian Other group is less likely to have a UK identity (38 per cent) and may be composed of more recent arrivals to the UK who are also more likely to have English as a second language (74.2 per cent). Other groups less likely to feel attachment to a UK identity include White Other, White Polish and African/Caribbean/Black groups. The Level of English variable provides an insight into the background of the large White Other group (n=4790). With over half (53.2 per cent) not speaking English as a first language and almost two thirds (64.5 per cent) not identifying as Scottish, British or another UK identity.

The individual-level geography variable confirms that most pupils live in urban areas, regardless of their ethnic background. Interestingly, White Other British groups are over represented in rural areas and this is also reflected in the school-level variable of geography. Deprivation of School reveals that African/Caribbean/Black pupils are over represented in schools with a higher proportion of pupils living in the most deprived datazones (14.5 per cent of pupils from this group attend schools with higher levels of deprivation compared with the average of 3.5 per cent). Another school variable, Denomination, reveals that 58 per cent of White Polish pupils attend a Roman Catholic school compared with the average of 17.2 per cent. The Geography of School variable shows that the majority of pupils attend schools in large urban areas or other urban areas. Asian Pakistani pupils are much more likely to attend schools in large urban areas (73.2 per cent). Mixed or multiple ethnic groups and White Polish pupils are more likely to attend schools in more rural areas than most other non-UK ethnic groups.

Diversity of school reveals the proportion of pupils in school from minority ethnic groups (including White Other/Polish). It highlights that some ethnic groups are more likely to attend more diverse schools, for example Asian Pakistani (52.3 per cent) and Asian Bangladeshi pupils (47 per cent) whereas only 8.5 per cent of White British pupils attended schools where more than twenty per cent of pupils are from an ethnic minority. The crosstabulations in Table 5-3 have been the first step in trying to understand what accounts for the differences in destination by ethnicity, observed in Table 5-2 and Figure 5-4 above. It raises the question as to whether these differences are the result of material deprivation (measured by SIMD or Free School Meals) or whether there are more complex explanations? What follow is the use of statistical modelling to establish whether variation still exist once these individual, school and regional characteristics are taken into account.

Table 5-3 Crosstabulations of ethnicity by individual characteristics (gender, deprivation, free school meals, national identity, Level of English) and school level characteristics (geography and diversity)

	White Scottish	White - Other British	White Irish	White Other	White Polish	African/ Caribbean/Black	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	Asian Pakistani	Asian Indian	Asian Bangladeshi	Asian Chinese	Asian Other	Other[2]	Not disclosed /Not known	Total
Gender															
Female	49.4	49.2	45.6	49.1	49.8	48.3	48.5	48.0	46.7	49.0	50.3	49.9	48.4	46.1	49.3
Male	50.6	50.8	54.4	50.9	50.2	51.7	51.5	52.0	53.3	51.0	49.7	50.1	51.6	53.9	50.7
Total	*100.0*	*100*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*
Deprivation (SIMD quintile)															
1 (most deprived)	20.2	8.0	15.4	29.8	46.9	53.2	16.3	15.3	14.3	19.0	16.8	35.0	31.9	22.0	20.3
2	19.4	11.5	14.1	18.2	21.9	15.5	18.1	24.1	15.9	14.0	14.9	18.1	20.6	19.7	19.2
3	20.2	27.0	19.5	17.7	17.1	10.6	19.5	18.1	19.6	23.5	16.8	16.1	18.6	19.4	20.2
4	20.9	32.5	28.2	16.6	9.8	10.5	22.5	21.6	18.9	19.0	18.6	14.0	14.9	19.6	20.9
5 (least deprived)	19.4	21.0	22.8	17.7	4.3	10.3	23.6	20.9	31.2	24.5	33.0	16.7	14.0	19.3	19.4
Total	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*
Registered for free school meals (FSM)															
Not registered	88.7	91.4	89.9	91.4	95.2	83.6	87.9	84.0	93.5	93.5	95.5	85.3	84.4	86.7	88.7
Registered for FSM	11.3	8.6	10.1	8.6	4.8	16.4	12.1	16.0	6.5	6.5	4.5	14.7	15.6	13.3	11.3
Total	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*
National identity															
UK identity[3]	98.6	96.7	53.0	35.5	2.3	32.9	91.9	84.1	70.9	75.0	72.0	38.0	49.0	46.1	95.2
Other Identity	1.4	3.3	47.0	64.5	97.7	67.1	8.1	15.9	29.1	25.0	28.0	62.0	51.0	53.9	4.8
Total	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*
Level of English															
English as first language	99.5	99.1	99.3	46.8	3.3	43.8	92.0	28.6	42.7	19.5	31.4	25.8	52.6	89.0	95.7
English not first language[4]	0.5	0.9	0.7	53.2	96.7	56.2	8.0	71.4	57.3	80.5	68.6	74.2	47.4	11.0	4.3
Total	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*
Geography of pupil[5]															
Rural area	20.0	45.3	24.8	14.6	6.9	4.4	15.8	2.9	4.2	4.5	6.3	5.4	11.9	17.6	19.9
Urban area	80.0	54.7	75.2	85.4	93.1	95.6	84.2	97.1	95.8	95.5	93.7	94.6	88.1	82.4	80.1
Total	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*

* In accordance with Statistical Disclosure Control (SDC) guidance, cell sizes where n=<10 have been supressed and replaced with an asterisk. In some cases, percentages and cell sizes of n=>10 will also be supressed to avoid disclosure of the original count.

[2] For the purposes of the descriptive statistics, Arab and Traveller/White/Gypsy/Occupational have been included in 'Other' owing to their small cell sizes

[3] UK identity - Scottish, English, NI, Welsh, British

[4] English as second language or 'other' (which includes New to English, Early Acquisition, Developing Competence, Competent, Fluent)

[5] The variable *Geography of Pupil* is based on the Scottish Government Urban Rural classification, which defines *Urban* as settlements of 3,000 or more people and *Rural* as settlements of less than 3,000 people.

Deprivation of school (proportion of pupils living in the 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland)															
0-25	60.1	85.4	67.8	58.9	47.8	34.2	64.7	44.7	55.7	68.9	62.1	43.9	48.7	65.4	60.3
26-49	29.9	12.0	28.0	31.2	40.5	35.1	29.1	47.3	35.2	28.5	29.2	38.2	33.5	25.2	29.8
50-75	6.4	2.2	*	6.0	5.7	16.3	4.9	6.8	7.0	*	7.1	10.9	8.0	5.8	6.4
76-100	3.6	0.5	*	3.8	6.0	14.5	1.3	1.1	2.1	*	1.6	7.0	9.7	3.5	3.5
Total	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*
Denomination of school															
Roman Catholic	17.2	3.9	38.5	18.5	42.0	37.3	16.1	24.6	20.4	9.0	11.6	30.6	19.6	13.6	17.2
Non-Denominational	82.8	96.1	61.5	81.5	58.0	62.7	83.9	75.4	79.6	91.0	88.4	69.4	80.4	86.4	82.8
Total	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*
	White Scottish	**White - Other British**	**White Irish**	**White Other**	**White Polish**	**African/ Caribbean/Black**	**Mixed or multiple ethnic groups**	**Asian Pakistani**	**Asian Indian**	**Asian Bangladeshi**	**Asian Chinese**	**Asian Other**	**Other[6]**	**Not disclosed /Not known**	**Total**
Geography of school															
Large Urban Areas	27.4	18.0	33.8	44.4	42.2	74.2	41.4	73.0	69.4	73.5	51.4	64.2	53.2	40.5	29.2
Other Urban Areas	46.0	28.9	38.5	34.8	44.7	19.2	35.9	20.5	21.9	13.0	35.7	24.6	34.3	35.6	44.4
Accessible Small Towns	9.8	15.1	13.5	7.6	5.0	3.0	9.1	1.6	3.1	5.0	6.0	4.3	3.0	14.7	9.7
Remote Small Towns	6.9	13.8	7.4	5.9	5.5	*	5.3	0.4	1.0	*	2.8	3.7	4.8	3.9	6.9
Accessible Rural	6.1	14.1	*	4.4	1.6	1.5	5.7	4.4	3.8	*	3.1	1.4	3.2	3.1	6.1
Remote Rural	3.8	10.1	*	2.9	1.0	*	2.6	0.1	0.9	*	1.0	1.7	1.4	2.3	3.8
Total	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*
Diversity of school (proportion of pupils in school from minority ethnic groups[7])															
0-<5	27.9	29.2	20.9	13.2	4.2	7.3	17.4	5.6	7.4	6.5	12.2	7.6	10.7	20.0	26.7
5-<10	44.7	47.4	37.2	35.5	35.6	21.0	37.1	16.1	21.5	16.5	31.9	23.0	33.8	40.2	43.6
10-<20	18.9	17.1	21.6	23.6	30.3	32.0	22.6	26.0	33.4	30.0	28.0	27.5	23.1	20.1	19.4
20+	8.5	6.2	20.3	27.7	29.8	39.7	22.9	52.3	37.7	47.0	28.0	41.9	32.4	19.7	10.3
Total	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*
Sample size															
N	228700	6253	148	4790	1002	1259	2111	3525	1009	200	880	987	929	2794	254587
	89.8	2.5	0.1	1.9	0.4	0.5	0.8	1.4	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.4	1.1	100.0

Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish School Census and the Leavers Survey 2012-2016

[6] For the purposes of the descriptive statistics, Arab and Traveller/White/Gypsy/Occupational have been included in 'Other' owing to their small cell sizes

[7] This variable uses schools data published by the Scottish Government (List of Schools and key characteristics 2016) The variable *Proportion of pupils in school from minority ethnic groups* includes all pupils where ethnicity is recorded as something other than those recorded as White - UK. Including the 'White Other' group.

5.2.2 Explaining ethnic variation in post-school destination

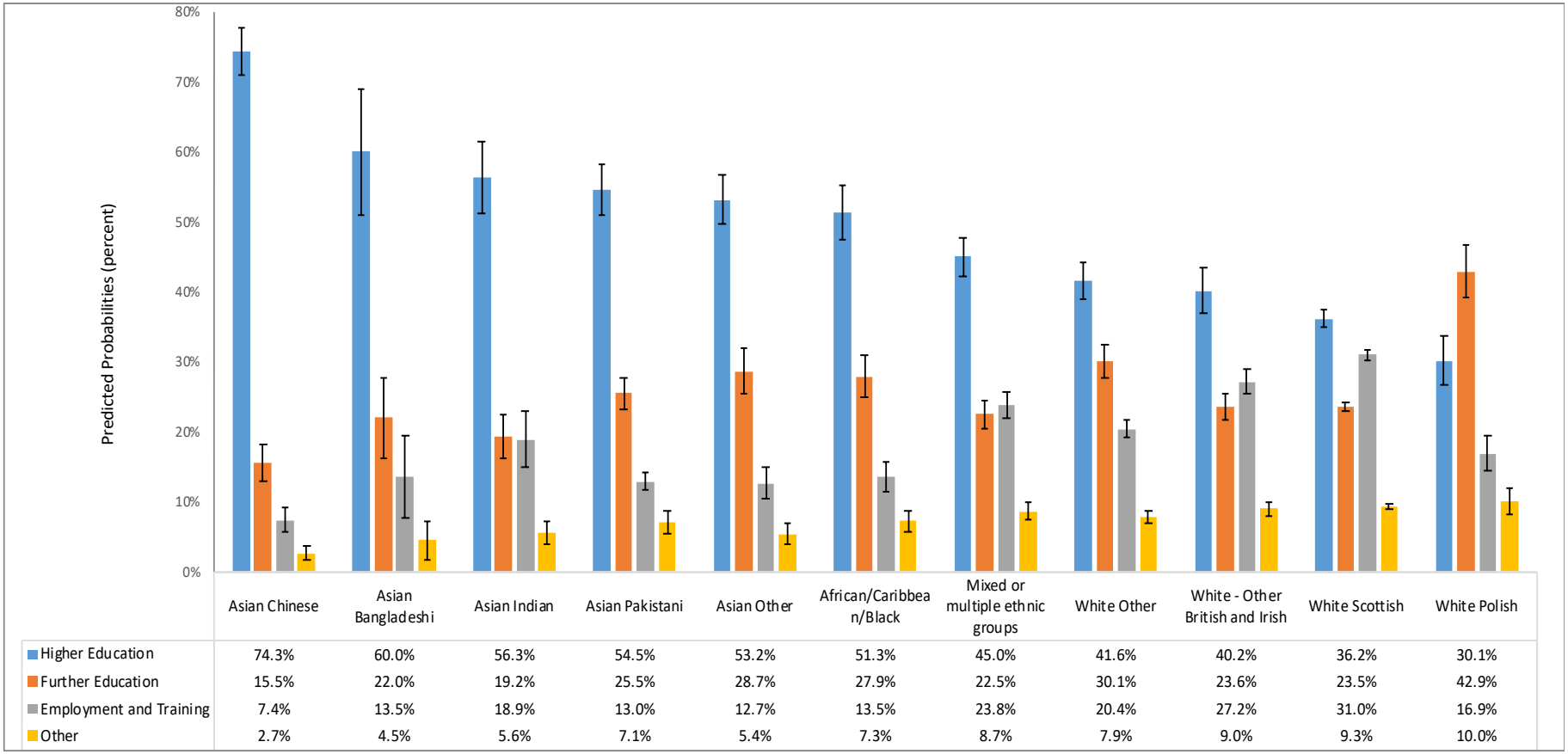
So far, the analysis has confirmed that there are significant differences between the destination of school leavers by ethnicity. They reveal Asian groups (Chinese, Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani) are progressing to Higher Education in much higher numbers than young people from White groups (Other British, White Scottish, White Polish). Crosstabulations have highlighted the compositional differences between ethnic groups. The next step is to fit a multinomial logistic regression – an extension of the ordinary logistic regression for multiple outcomes. It will compare the probability of leaving school and going to each destination - Higher Education, Further Education, Employment and Training or Other. The regression model is used to adjust for a range of individual, school level and regional factors. In the first model (Model 1) the regression adjusts for ethnicity only and provides a baseline comparison. Later models add other covariates to account for differences between the composition of ethnic groups. Next, additional covariates are added to the model to account for compositional differences between the groups. The first step is to explore the hypothesis that these differences can be explained by individual characteristics, such as gender, Level of English, the age of the school leaver, level of deprivation and geography of the pupil. Variables such a Deprivation and Free School Meal eligibility serve as imperfect proxy measures for income and wealth, as this information is not available in the Schools Census[8]. Next, school-level covariates were added, including school size and composition. Finally, Model 4 incorporates regional characteristics such as progression to Higher Education across the Local Authority and the number of Universities in the region. Figure 5-6 shows the results for model 4, and Figure 5-7 includes both Model 1 and Model 4 for comparison purposes. For the full results see table in Appendix N.

[8] Individual variables on attainment are not included for reasons of collinearity but this association was explored using descriptive statistics (not shown here)

Predicting school leaver destination by ethnicity (Model 1)

Figure 5-5 reveals the results of Model 1 and are reported as predicted probabilities. It is evident that Higher Education is the most common destination for all ethnic groups, apart from White Polish who are more likely to attend Further Education (42.9 per cent chance). Further Education is the next most likely destination for most ethnic groups, although figures for White Other and White Other British and Irish groups are not statistically significant. For White Scottish young people Employment and Training is the most common destination after Higher Education, with a third of school leavers pursuing this route. Asian groups appear least likely to go on to 'Other' destinations. Overall, these figures align with the descriptive statistics which show that the probability of going to Higher Education is higher among Asian ethnic groups and lowest amongst White Polish, White Scottish and White Other British and Irish.

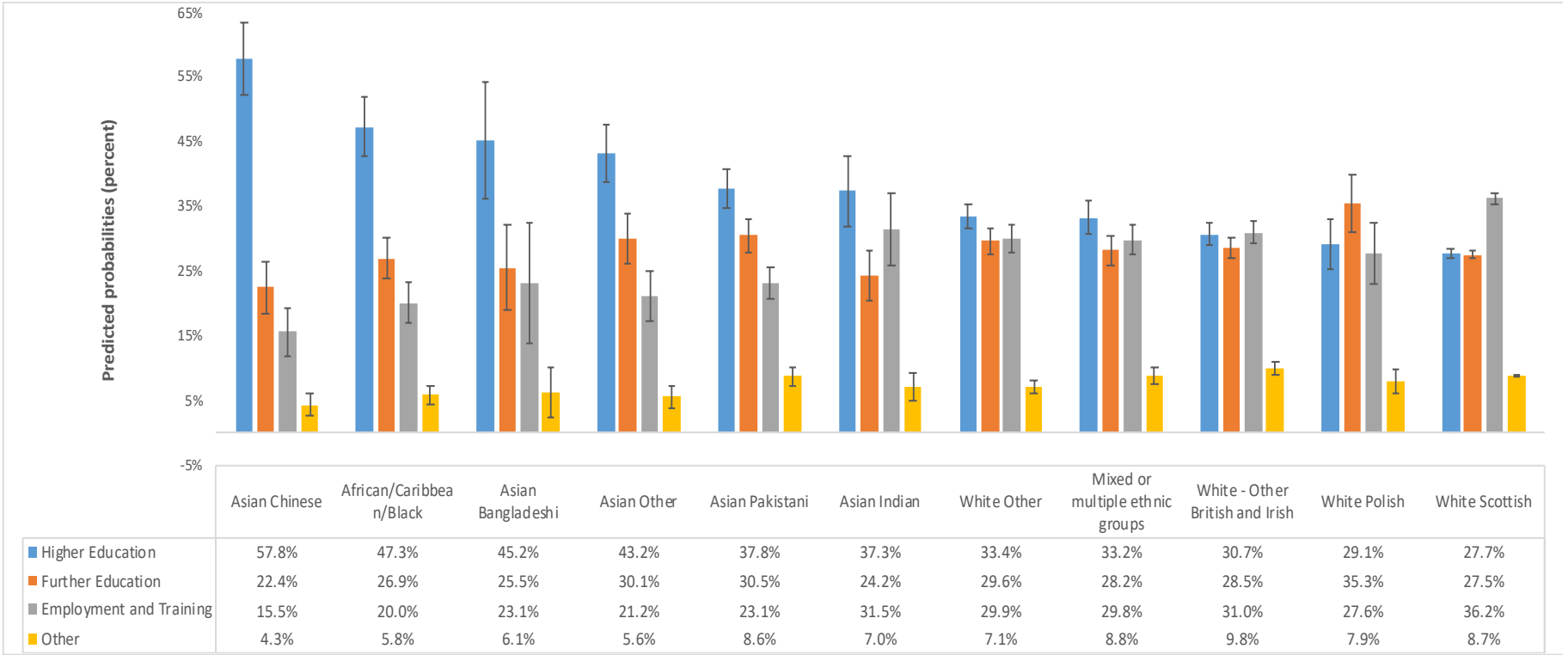
Figure 5-5: Predicted probability of school leaver destination by ethnic group adjusted for ethnicity only (Model 1)



	Asian Chinese	Asian Bangladeshi	Asian Indian	Asian Pakistani	Asian Other	African/Caribbean/Black	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	White Other	White - Other British and Irish	White Scottish	White Polish
Higher Education	74.3%	60.0%	56.3%	54.5%	53.2%	51.3%	45.0%	41.6%	40.2%	36.2%	30.1%
Further Education	15.5%	22.0%	19.2%	25.5%	28.7%	27.9%	22.5%	30.1%	23.6%	23.5%	42.9%
Employment and Training	7.4%	13.5%	18.9%	13.0%	12.7%	13.5%	23.8%	20.4%	27.2%	31.0%	16.9%
Other	2.7%	4.5%	5.6%	7.1%	5.4%	7.3%	8.7%	7.9%	9.0%	9.3%	10.0%

Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish School Census and the Leavers Survey 2012-2016
Note – School leavers who had not disclosed their ethnicity and 'other' are not included in the figure.

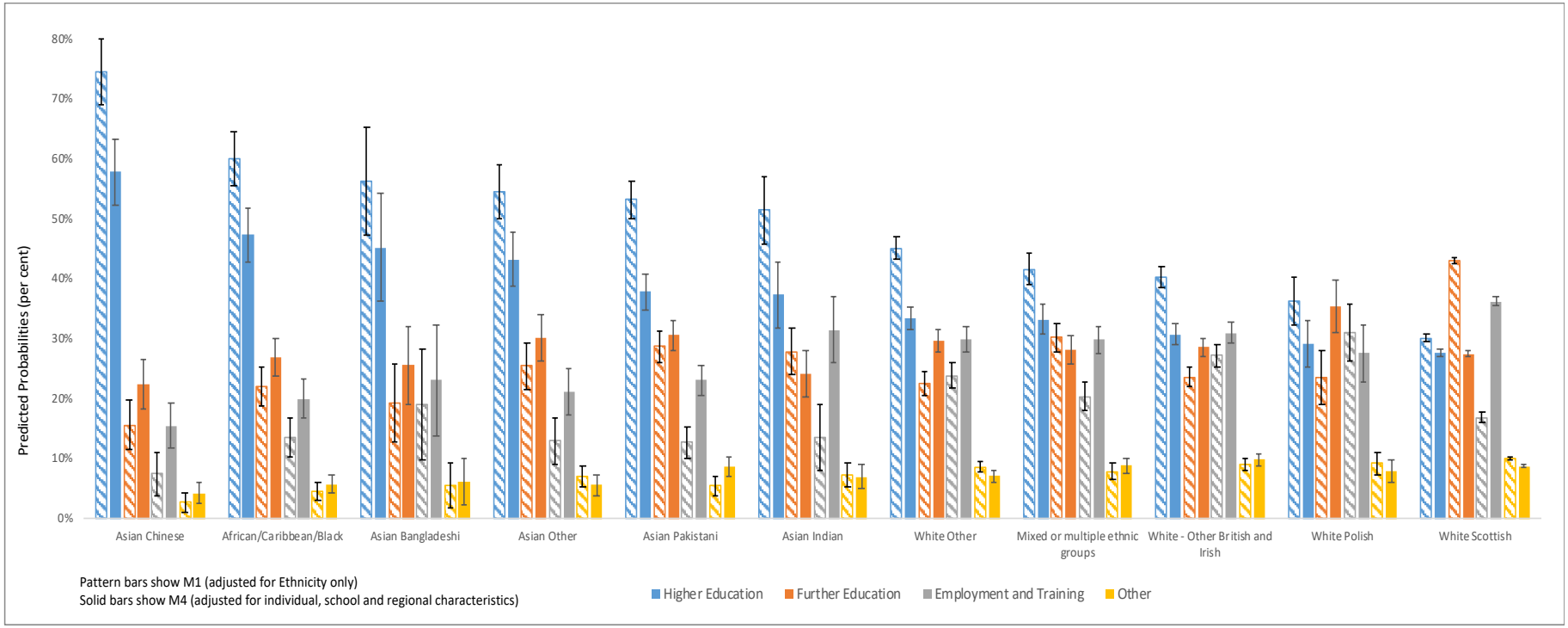
Figure 5-6 Predicted probability of school leaver destination by ethnic group adjusted for individual, school and regional factors (Model 4)



	Asian Chinese	African/Caribbean/Black	Asian Bangladeshi	Asian Other	Asian Pakistani	Asian Indian	White Other	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	White - Other British and Irish	White Polish	White Scottish
Higher Education	57.8%	47.3%	45.2%	43.2%	37.8%	37.3%	33.4%	33.2%	30.7%	29.1%	27.7%
Further Education	22.4%	26.9%	25.5%	30.1%	30.5%	24.2%	29.6%	28.2%	28.5%	35.3%	27.5%
Employment and Training	15.5%	20.0%	23.1%	21.2%	23.1%	31.5%	29.9%	29.8%	31.0%	27.6%	36.2%
Other	4.3%	5.8%	6.1%	5.6%	8.6%	7.0%	7.1%	8.8%	9.8%	7.9%	8.7%

Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish School Census and the Leavers Survey 2012-2016
Note – School leavers who had not disclosed their ethnicity and 'other' are not included in the figure.
The significantly statistic difference in the chance of going to the destination compared with the reference category of white Scottish

Figure 5-7: Predicted probability of school leaver destination by ethnic group: ethnicity only model (Model 1) compared to the fully adjusted model (Model 4)



Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish School Census and the Leavers Survey 2012-2016
Note – School leavers who had not disclosed their ethnicity and 'other' are not included in the figure.

Predicting school leaver destination by ethnicity and a range of other factors

After adjusting for individual, school and regional factors known to be associated with post-school outcomes, it is evident that statistically significant differences persist in the likelihood of attending Higher Education, Further Education or employment and training after school (see Model 4, Figure 5-6). Chinese, Black, Bangladeshi, Other Asian, Indian, White Other, Mixed and White British are all more likely than White Scottish young people to be in Higher Education nine months after leaving school. The predicted probability of going to Higher Education are around 25 – 30 per cent. In contrast, most ethnic groups, after controls, have a lower probability than White Scottish of attending Further Education after school, this is particularly so for Black and Asian groups. Notably, White Polish young people are more likely than White Scottish and all other ethnic groups to attend Further Education after school, with statistical significance around one in three chance of going to Further Education for White Polish compared to one in four chance for White Scottish young people. Young people from all minority ethnic groups apart from Indian have a lower probability of entering employment after school than White Scottish. It is lowest for Black groups (15-20 per cent) with for example White Scottish having twice the probability of employment than Chinese (33 per cent compared to 15 per cent).

Destinations: Higher Education

In Figure 5-6, it is evident that Asian Chinese remain the most likely ethnic group to progress to Higher Education, even after adjusting for a range of socio-economic and school factors (albeit a reduced probability of 57.8 per cent compared with 74.3 per cent in M1). In the fully adjusted model, African/Caribbean/Black become the second most likely group to attend university (47.3 per cent chance). This may be explained by this group being overrepresented in areas of multiple deprivation. Analysis of the 2011 Census reveals that the African/Caribbean/Black population in Scotland are more likely to be economically active and have high levels of education, however are also more likely to occupy socially and privately rented housing than the White Scottish group which may explain these results (See Appendix O for figures from the 2011 Census microdata). Figure 5-6 also shows that the probability of going to university is now lowest amongst White Scottish

(27.7 per cent) White Polish (29.1 per cent) and White – Other British and Irish groups (30.7 per cent). Once deprivation, gender and geography are taken into account, White Polish young people are no longer the least likely to attend Higher Education, however the figure remains smaller than all other ethnic minority groups. Existing literature has shown there have been several distinct waves of Polish migration to the UK since accession in 2004 (Burrell, 2009) as well as distinctive patterns to more rural areas in Scotland (Findlay & McCollum, 2013; Moskal, 2015; Piętka-Nykaza & McGhee, 2017). Examination of the 2011 Census microdata reveals that, compared to the Scottish average, White Poles have higher levels of education and are more likely to be employed in full time work, however are often working in low paid roles. For example, 27 per cent of White Poles were employed in elementary occupations, compared with 12 per cent of White Scottish (authors analysis of 2011 Census, details in Appendix O). This evidence helps to explain why there may be an overrepresentation of White Poles in areas of deprivation where housing costs are lower and may be more affordable.

Destinations: Further Education, Employment and Training and Other

Results in the fully adjusted model (Figure 5-6) also show that White Polish young people (35.3 per cent) are more than twice as likely to attend Further Education than Asian groups (Chinese, Bangladeshi and Indian). The White Polish group is the only ethnic group where there is a greater chance of going to Further Education than any other destination. The White Scottish group are the most likely to undertake employment, training or voluntary work on leaving school (36.2 per cent chance). This raises interesting questions about how apprenticeships, training schemes and employment opportunities are perceived by minority and migrant young people as well as how they are promoted within schools. In February 2018, a Government Scheme was launched to tackle the low uptake of apprenticeships among under-represented groups, including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people as well as those from lower socio-economic backgrounds (Department for Education, 2018).

Finally, with regard to 'Other' destinations (n=23,497) which includes young people who are seeking employment, not seeking, unknown and excluded. The three most likely groups to go to Other Destinations are White Other British and Irish (9.9 per

cent) Mixed or multiple ethnic groups (8.8 per cent) and White Scottish (8.7 per cent). Although this composite category is hard to interrogate, this closer analysis of the figures points to much higher rates of unemployment and inactivity than the Scottish Government's published figures on 'Positive Destinations'. In conclusion, the multinomial logistic regression model has explored the probability of progressing to four destinations after leaving school, adjusting for individual, school level and regional characteristics. The modelling has proved effective in reducing some of the variance between ethnic groups, however the findings continue to support the hypothesis that there are ethnic differences in the destination of school leavers.

5.2.3 Exploring a 'school effect' on the destination of leavers

This final set of models allows assessment of whether the ethnic differences in destination are as a result of the sorting of ethnic groups into schools. For example, could these variations which have been observed reflect differences in the composition and culture of schools rather than other influences, including ethnic identity itself? If ethnic differences persist in the results of these models, it is possible to conclude that something about ethnic group identity – beyond the individual, school and regional characteristics, and any potential sorting into schools by ethnicity – is shaping young people's post-school trajectories.

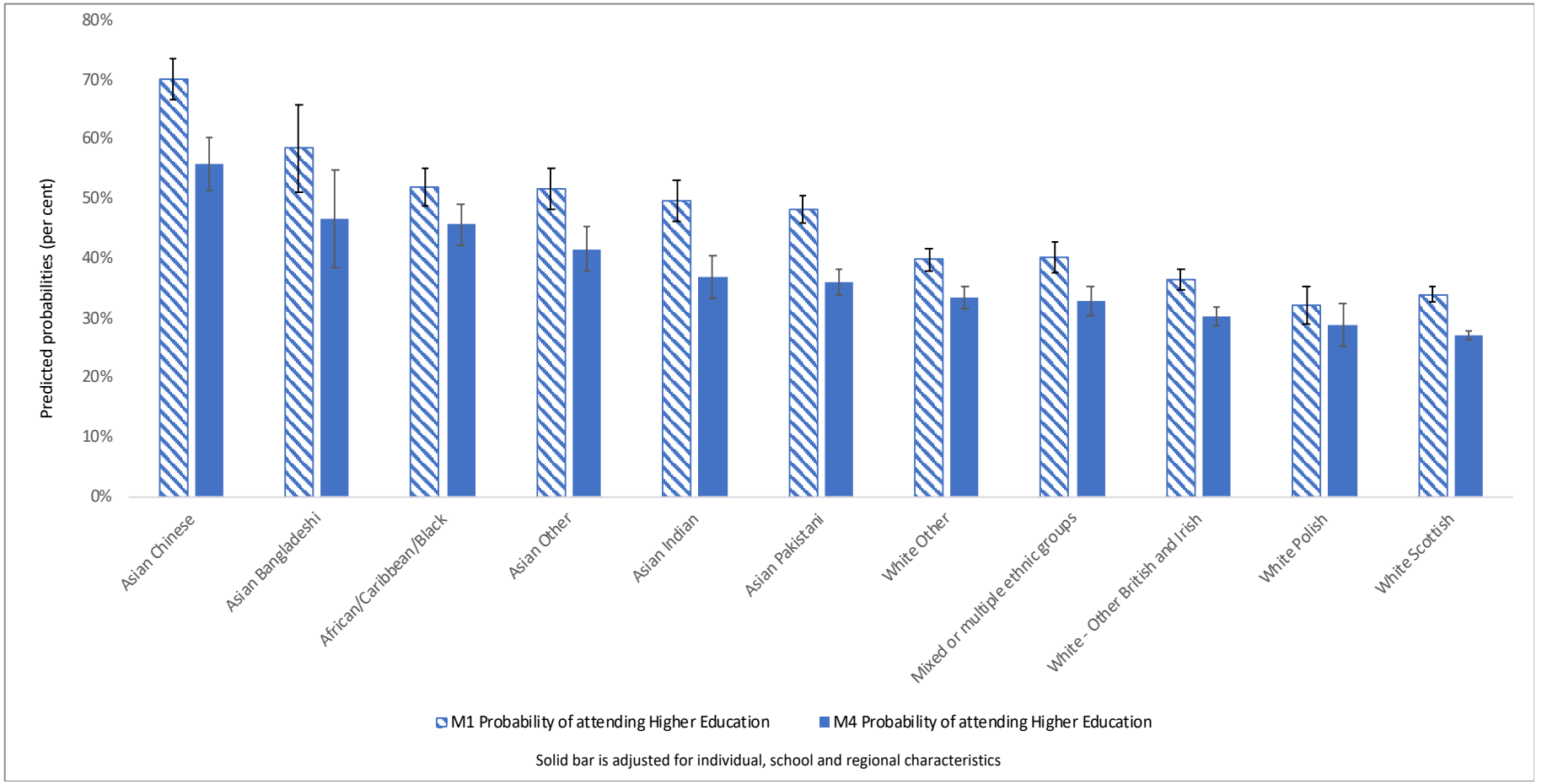
Results are presented for a single destination - Higher Education. Higher Education remains a strong predictor of future employment, wage and poverty rates (Britton et al., 2016; Hirsch, 2007; HM Government, 2018). Higher Education emerged as a strong theme throughout the qualitative research and remains a priority for many school leavers, schools, local authorities and national education policy (Scottish Government, 2018c). A multilevel model is used as tool to explore hierarchies within the data and results (Figure 5-8) are reported as predicted probabilities, with the ethnicity only model (Model 1, hatched bars) presented alongside the fully adjusted model (Model 4, solid bars).

The results show that the multilevel analysis has made marginal differences in the estimated probability of young people attending Higher Education immediately after school. Confidence intervals have been reduced and the probabilities reduce fractionally for some groups. In the fully adjusted model, it is clear that Asian Chinese school leavers remain the most likely to progress to Higher Education (55.8 per cent chance) followed by Asian Bangladeshi (46.7 per cent) and African Caribbean (45.8 per cent). The use of a multilevel model increased the estimates for Asian Bangladeshi slightly indicating that there may have been a small school level effect. As covariates are added to the multilevel model, the advantage for some Asian groups is slightly attenuated while remaining statistically significant. The fully adjusted model shows that the least likely groups to go straight to Higher Education are White Scottish (27.1 per cent) White Polish (28.7 per cent) and White-Other British and Irish (30.2 per cent).

5.2.4 Summary

This section has shown that there are differences between ethnic groups in post-school destination. The multinomial analysis was used to assess whether these differences could be explained by the individual characteristics of school leavers. Findings reveal that factors such as gender and deprivation do account for some, but not all variation in the destination of school leavers. The multilevel model results reveal that ethnic differences cannot be fully explained by individual, school and regional characteristics or sorting (clusters) within schools. Throughout the analysis the covariates acted in predictable ways in relation to the outcome destination. The differences in destination by ethnic background cannot be fully understood through this analysis. Thus, qualitative evidence will be examined to more fully understand the significance of ethnicity in shaping educational transitions.

Figure 5-8 Predicted probability of going to Higher Education



Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish School Census and the Leavers Survey 2012-2016

5.3 Exploring variations in school leaver perceptions of success

The quantitative analysis in this chapter has exposed the extent to which progression to particular post-school destinations varies by ethnic background. The findings also demonstrate that this variation cannot be explained by the characteristics of school leavers, prompting the need for further investigation. This section sets out to mirror the work in the first part of this chapter, using qualitative methodologies to gain a deeper understanding of why destinations vary by ethnic group, and the significance of these differences. It explores whether success itself is perceived differently by school leavers. The analysis is driven by three questions: do young people aim for different destinations? How do definitions of success change over time for young people? Finally, do minority/migrant pupils define long term success differently?

5.3.1 Do young people with a migrant background aim for different destinations?

The first step in this enquiry is to establish whether migrant/minority school leavers are actually setting out to achieve distinctive goals. As discussed, in the methods chapter, a combination of interviews and focus groups were used to explore the dynamic process of transition. Discussing outcomes and plans after school can be a sensitive topic for students, who are regularly interviewed by teachers and careers advisers about what they plan to do after school. As a result, the research was deliberate in its approach and aimed to couch this difficult question in different ways so as not to elicit a 'standard' response, but something more discursive, thus allowing the student to openly discuss their reflection on 'what's next' (post-school), however broad brush or detailed these plans were. The first interview focused on facilitating participants to construct a personal timeline which generated open ended questions. This allowed students to talk about their plans for after they had left school, however it was during interview two that this topic was explored in

greater depth. Finally, the focus group held in each school was used to corroborate findings and test ideas. The following key themes emerged from this process.

The pedestal of Higher Education

Both the literature and the evidence displayed above demonstrate that a high proportion of young people from Asian backgrounds progress to university after school, the focus group provided opportunities to discuss these patterns directly with young people. Figure 5-4 (see page 131) was enlarged and distributed to participants during the focus group. As discussed in the methods chapter (chapter 4), the facilitator gave no comments as the graph was handed out, but asked participants to share their thoughts and first impressions. In the urban school, this activity sparked debate and led to discussion about the emphasis which is placed on Higher Education by some groups. As soon as the graphs were distributed, three British Asian students (all male) were immediately engaged by the findings. They joked with one another, became animated as they saw the figures and were asked to share their reflections with everyone. Ali, born in the Netherlands to Bengali parents, noted the high number of Asian school-leavers attending Higher Education, suggesting '…most Asian parents compete against other parents' (Ali, urban school). His peers nodded and began to speak over one another about professional roles which they felt were idealised ('lawyers', 'doctors' 'accountants'). This trope of Asian students performing well and achieving the grades to go to university is a familiar one (Reay, Davies, David, & Ball, 2001) and appeared to be a narrative that the students were keen to reproduce and reinforce. As we will see from the interviews, some students from this background were resisting this narrative but in the larger group it was an idea that was left unchallenged. This nuance was not explored in the focus group, as the discussion quickly shifted. However, in the interviews which followed, there was an opportunity to explore these ideas in greater depth.

Akash is one of the three students who had been animated in the focus group. He exemplifies an unquestioning emphasis on the value of Higher Education which many students expressed. Akash is the youngest of seven siblings, born in Scotland to Bangladeshi parents. In the second interview, he is asked about the

'ideal school leaver'. Akash instantly makes the connection between qualifications at school, access to Higher Education and links this to future job opportunities:

> A successful S5 student? Well, it would probably be someone who has taken lots of Highers; let's say four or five even six perhaps and then if they get the qualifications at the end of year to me that is a successful student. Because number one they're sorted for university because the average is about five or six Highers with good grades, and in sixth year in my opinion it's just a chill year for them. Less stressful and less pressure…. I think in my opinion they go straight to Uni, like a big Uni, like Cambridge or Oxford or Napier or Heriot Watt. They stay on 'til fourth year and then they graduate and get a first class or a second-class degree then they can look for a job straight away. I think that's what a perfect school leaver is.
>
> Akash, interview 2, urban school

Akash outlines, without hesitation, a coherent and clear trajectory for a 'model school leaver'. The transitional phase he describes will be 'a success' based on a range of factors. For example, the number of subjects taken ('four or five or even six'), the level of achievement in these subjects ('they get the qualifications') which reduces the pressure to perform academically in the final year of school ('chill year'). These events would be followed by entrance to Higher Education, where a range of institutions are described in the same breath, two local Universities and two elite institutions with a global reputation. Akash goes further, describing a trajectory which extends beyond school and university. He talks about gaining a particular degree ('first or second class') and then relates this to readiness for the labour market. This well-developed response to a question about successful school leavers reveals a lot about the value Akash places on going to university and the role he feels it can play in securing 'a job straight away'. This idealised view of Higher Education was not unique to young Asian participants in the study, but the singular focus on university and the passion with which this narrative was rehearsed and repeated (in interviews and focus groups) was distinctive.

Another feature of this singular focus on university was the academic background of the participants. In most cases this elevated view of Higher Education was usually only expressed by young people who were on this trajectory themselves and were aiming to go to university. However, for Akash and a number of other participants from minority and migrant backgrounds (Lili, Ana, Fabio, Hamida and Tala), they discussed ambitions to go to university even if this wasn't an imminent option for them, perhaps due to English levels, current qualifications or ability. For

example, Akash had been given work experience at a local charity and showed promise as a trainee IT technician, but described in his interviews that he would rather remain in school in the hope of gaining more qualifications. Despite struggling with his studies and not holding the necessary qualifications to access Higher Education, he remained focussed on his own transition to university. In the third and final interview, he discussed the results of his S5 exams and his own long-term plans.

> I just got a C in Cake Craft and I failed Biology and English …I've been wanting to go to college to do an HNC, then HND for two years and then hopefully go on to Uni to do a couple of years there.
>
> Akash, interview 3, urban school

Akash plots a pathway to university through college and would prefer to hold on to these plans than accept a vocational training program. Like a number of other participants, he focuses on university as a mechanism for acquiring a form of educational capital which is distinctive (from college or more vocational qualifications) and will signal greater opportunities in the labour market in the future. Interestingly, in the case of Akash, he retains this focus on Higher Education despite the mixed experiences of some of his older siblings who had gone to university. He retells the story of his sister's educational success in two of his interviews (almost word for word) describing her as a model student, achieving six Highers and eventually leaving school to study medicine. In the second interview with Akash, he adds that his sister is not a doctor and soon dropped out of medicine. When asked about this, Akash blames his parents for pushing his sister to apply for medicine. Commenting 'she got kinda forced into doing that' (Akash). He explains that this resulted in a decline in his sister's health and eventually her leaving her studies entirely. Despite this experience, he remains focussed on his own ambitions and does not attempt to resist or question these expectations. In many ways, Akash illustrates what was discussed in the focus group, the idea that parental expectations play a significant role in post-school choices. However, not all participants conform to this pattern as illustrated below.

Alternative narratives of success

For many other school leavers, there was a much broader conceptualisation of a the 'ideal school leaver'. A number of students from different migrant backgrounds resisted the idea that university was the central aim. Lucas, born in the US to Polish parents, suggested that school leavers should 'have an 'unconditional' [offer at university] or a guaranteed work placement or apprenticeship' (Lucas, rural school, interview 2). This succinct answer matches almost exactly the governments definition of a positive destination. Similarly, Sasha adopts a broader perspective and places emphasis on gaining qualifications rather than just going to university.

> I think that a successful school leaver is when you got at least your Nat5's so you can go into College. So, you can do something with it! I know some people in [local town] who left in S4 and they've got nothing! They failed everything! They don't have job, they can't find job because they don't have qualifications. So, they can't go to College because they don't have qualifications! And if you missed it, you can't get it back, you can't go back to school and if you decided to leave and you have no qualification, that really starts to annoy me. Because if people do that, I don't like it.
>
> Sasha, interview 2, rural school

Sasha is a Russian born pupil who arrived in Scotland a few months prior to the first interview. She described being new to the Scottish system, however when asked about success, she focused on the importance of qualifications. In this quote, she expresses frustration that some students leave school with 'nothing'. Her own plan is to study medicine at a Scottish university, but this is not a standard she expects for everyone. This perspective on the importance of leaving school with qualifications, was frequently expressed by the young migrants in this study, who recognised that qualifications (from either college or university) could lead to opportunities in the labour market. This theme will be developed further in the following chapter in the context of understanding how experiences of transition are distinctive for young migrants.

In contrast, White Scottish participants with no ethnic or migrant backgrounds were much more likely to downplay the importance of university and even qualifications, in favour of a broader understanding of success, linked to having confidence, fulfilling personal goals and crucially, 'having a plan'. Corran and Kieran both describe a model school leaver:

> Probably someone who is relatively confident in where they want to go after school and has a basic plan, knows at least a little bit about how to actually function in the real world outside of school. That kind of thing, so worldly-wise as well as much as academically to be honest.
>
> Corran, interview 2, urban school

> Someone who can walk out here and into another place – just like that. Has their life sorted. They know what they want to do and where they want to go and how they want to do it.
>
> Kieran, interview 2, rural school

This focus on being 'world-wise' rather than academic or being confident rather than clever epitomises many of the objectives in the new Scottish curriculum. Learners are encouraged to be 'confident, responsible, effective and successful' (Scottish Government 2011). On the surface, it appeared that many students subscribed to this view and this was articulated most commonly by students from White Scottish backgrounds. Perhaps reflecting differences in parental expectations which will be discussed later in this chapter and in the discussion.

This section has sought to ask whether young people with a migrant background aim for different destinations. The evidence above shows that at the surface level there do appear to be trends, with many British Asian students placing an emphasis on university, while school leavers from non-UK backgrounds place a broader emphasis on qualifications. The third perspective, that of 'having a plan' was more frequently expressed by young people with a White Scottish background. This provides a clear parallel with the quantitative findings which showed that a higher proportion of Asian students' progress to Higher Education after school compared with White groups. However, as discussed below, the qualitative findings reveal greater complexity, with narratives of success often inconsistent and contradictory.

5.3.2 How do understandings of success change over time?

The longitudinal nature of the research provided unique insights into the changes which occur during the course of transition. These changes were fuelled by a range of factors including less/more favourable exam results than expected, the increasing/waning influence of friends and family and finally, the role of work experience, career days and input from outside agencies. This longitudinal approach also allowed opportunities to tease out complexity in how young people understood success, observing the decisions which were made which were often inconsistent with the verbal responses which were given.

Fluidity and flexibility of plans

Meena was born in the UK with dual ethnic heritage, her father was born in Pakistan and retains close links to family in Pakistan, and her mother is White Scottish. She took part in the urban school focus group described earlier and remained quiet when another student with Asian heritage talked about the importance of university. Meena illustrates the nuance which is often lost in the statistics about young people attending university. She demonstrates a gradual shift in her expectations over time and across the three interviews. She begins in the first interview explaining she would like to take a gap year in Africa after leaving school. As shown in the quote below, she discussed this with her parents and received a mixed reaction.

Helen Tell me about the decision to stay in S5, were you always going to stay on?

Meena Yeah. It's just coz my family, my Dad wanted me to leave at the end of fifth year and go on to university. But I think that's far too big a jump and I'm not the most confident person so I think if I stay for sixth year and build that up a bit and get more Highers, I think that would be a better choice for me.

Helen Your Dad is quite ambitious for you?

Meena Yeah [laughs]

Helen Does he have a specific career in mind?

Meena I think so, he likes to *push*. So, if I say something and he doesn't think it's good enough it kinda goes in one ear and out the other! [laughs] It is quite a challenge! My Mum's not too bothered, she just says whatever I want to do I can do.

Helen Do you have ideas about what's next, once you leave school?

Meena Well, I wanna take a gap year.

Helen Okay, and your Dad?

Meena He's not very happy about it! [laughs] I want to do volunteering in Africa, maybe…I've always wanted to do it since I was little. I've just recently been on a school trip about a workshop about Scotland's link with Malawi. So, I went on that and we got given loads of opportunities to sign up for it. It's just something I've always wanted to do.

Meena, Interview 1, urban school,

By the second interview, Meena continues to express her concerns about what she will do after school and when asked about where she hopes to live, she says:

> Hopefully not still in Scotland. Hopefully I've like moved somewhere else ...doing something that I actually enjoy and that I've not been liked pushed into just because that's seen as a successful job or like a successful course to take to the job.
>
> Meena, interview 2, urban school

She articulates more firmly than in the first interview a desire to resist the pressures around her and pursue a career which she enjoys. Like Akash, Meena describes the transition of older siblings who have been 'pushed' into a university course which they didn't enjoy. Meena speaks in this interview about her ideas of success and the desire to leave home and choose her own pathway. However, by the third interview (which took place six months after the second) university has been re-established as the expectation and Meena no longer wants to leave home. She said:

> In school, we have started our UCAS applications which makes me a little bit anxious as I'm still not 100% sure on what university courses I want to apply for. I've been to a few career meetings and UCAS open days and spoke to a lot of universities around Scotland. I was looking into English creative writing courses as that may be something. I'm interested in. My plan is to apply for a few courses that I am interested in and then make a final decision. For the moment, I would like to stay close to Edinburgh as I feel that I'm not ready to move far away or abroad, so I will apply for universities in Edinburgh or close by.
>
> Meena, interview 2, urban school

Since the first interview where Meena explored ideas of adventure, to the second where she sought to challenge expectations and chart her own path, to this final interview where she seems to be adapting to the expectations at home and at school. Meena gradually conforms to some of the expectations she feels. Meena epitomises many of the shifts and fluid ideas which mark this period of transition and her ethnic background introduces additional complexity and this is shaping her choices.

Resisting the pressure to conform

For many participants (from all backgrounds), the summer period between S5 and S6 is a pivotal one. Exam results can alter plans and the prospect of leaving school may seem more imminent as applications for colleges and university are being prepared. This research which spanned this period was able to observe the changes which took place in many students. The initial interviews had elicited definite views on success and the characteristics of a school leaver. Many students, particularly those from White Scottish participants had prioritised reaching one's own potential and knowing where they were going, rather than placing emphasis on the 'destination'. However, over time, a paradox emerged, a difference between what young people said about success and their experiences of it. For example, in early discussion many students had adopted a discourse of success which was underpinned by personal achievement (success is individual and internally set), however as the deadline to submit university applications approached, students were operating in an environment which would judge them on standards which were public and externally set. This mismatch between abstract understandings of success and the lived reality of it emerges as a key theme through the interviews and will be discussed at length in the final chapter.

This realisation was most vividly described by Leanne, who expresses her frustration that on the one hand she told she was choice about her future, but on the other hand, university is in fact the only option presented to her.

> I think most people *do* want to go to uni but there is [sic] some people and they're like 'well we know we are *not* going to uni' and then people [external agencies] come in –this guy came in and spoke to us and he was like 'put down your top universities' and we were like 'I don't want to go to university'. We sat and listened for a whole hour about unis and stuff. It was interesting, but then he was like 'why haven't you written anything down?' and I was like 'I haven't even looked at uni, I don't want to go to uni!
>
> Leanne, interview 2, rural school

Leanne was asked what she felt had influenced her views on university.

> I don't know what's influenced me but I think it's just myself! I just know I don't want to go to Uni. When I was little, everyone wants to go to university, but when I got to High School I was like 'mwhaa' [negative]. Say I found a job, I could go to college and then I might go to university after College. I might decide after school that I want to go to Uni but just now I don't.
>
> Leanne, interview 2, rural school

Leanne stands out as someone who is deliberately resisting the pressure placed on her to conform. She is not applying to university nor feigning interest as she suggests that some of her peers do. When she is asked what had shaped this decision, Leanne isn't sure. However, what she describes is an increasingly common pattern of transition which is marked by cycles of employment, training and education which do not follow a standardised route (Bynner, 2005; Schoon & Eccles, 2014).

This recognition that success can look different for different people and pathways may be fluid and fragmented is understood theoretically by some students. In early interviews, several White Scottish students actively promote this idea, but when the moment comes it is rarely pursued. Leanne and a handful of other students are an exception to this. For many pupils, Leanne's decision to not apply to university when she is capable of it is unthinkable. By the end of the study, a number of White Scottish students with excellent grades were choosing not to go to university, others possessed the grades to pursue medicine or law but had decided to opt for less prestigious courses which require lower grades than they had achieved. The quote below from Becky provides an insight into the competing ideas of success

and her evaluation criteria, which appears to be on happiness rather than status or salary:

> My Biology teacher told me to look more into medicine … I think that would be too stressful and you have to work nights and I just don't think that's what I want to do… The teacher was like 'Why do you want to do Physio so much, if you can get the grades and you've got the right kind of personality for it and you could probably get in, then why would you do physio instead of medicine? It's a similar job and you'd get twice the pay.' I was like 'Yeah, but. Is it worth it? You get enough pay as a physio, you get quite a bit'…. I'm kind of like, you don't need a lot of money because I've never had a lot of money, we've always just sort of had enough. So, not having as much as a Doctor wouldn't affect me. The amount a Physio gets is like [shocked face] to me!
>
> Becky, interview 2, rural school

Becky discusses this decision in-depth during interview 2 and remains focussed on studying physiotherapy in the third interview. Becky describes weighing up the course entry requirements, future salary and the likelihood she will enjoy the role. As with other participants, it was teachers, rather than parents who were encouraging the student to aim for a higher status career. When asked what her parents thought, Becky responded 'They laughed at the idea of a doctor!' (Becky, interview 2). These students however were resisting this school-based pressure and were making choices based on what they hoped they would enjoy rather than the final salary or assumed status. For young people from migrant and minority backgrounds, this approach was unheard of. The expectations of family (at home and abroad) were often dominant (a theme which will be discussed in the next chapter) and therefore success was often closely connected to academic attainment and career progression.

5.3.3 Do migrants define future success differently?

So far, this chapter has shown the varied perspectives on the 'ideal destination' after school and has demonstrated that understandings of success change over time. In this final section, the notion of success is explored more broadly, focusing particularly on whether longer term aspirations are different for young people with a migration background.

Contested ideas of success

As discussed above, school leavers appear to hold several competing narratives of success. Some focus on conventional markers of educational success such as going to university and getting good grades, while others saw success as personalised and individual. These definitions were often conflicted and were contradictory. In this final section, two participants are highlighted to illustrate the tension between these competing ideas of success, which it is argued, is particularly challenging for young people from minority and migrant backgrounds.

Ana is a participant who was born in Poland and arrived in Scotland during primary school. She speaks with a broad Scottish accent and eloquently describes her experiences as a young Pole growing up in Scotland. When asked about success, Ana articulates what many of her contemporaries from White Scottish backgrounds have; she suggests that success is about happiness rather than passing exams and gaining external markers of success. In the first interview she describes her approach to work and says,

> I am a rebel … I do want to learn but I don't want to be some person that sits with books. I still want to enjoy my life. So, I do try and everything –read books but you have to have the good parts in life! The good part isn't just education. I understand that I need that for the future and everything, but [pause] you still have to have memories for your children.
>
> Ana, interview 1, rural school

This quote sets out Ana's approach to her studies. She is keen to enjoy life and wants to prioritise happiness and having a good time while she is young. This is

particularly important to her during the first interview, where she talks about her 'traditional upbringing' and the expectations of her parents. By the second interview however, her language has softened and her priorities appear to have shifted.

> I don't want to say that number one is education, but actually it is -to have a better future. But, as well I want to be happy –to get on well with my parents, find my way, find a really good job I'm interested in. Even though I'll still be in school, I really want to have some money aside.
>
> Ana, interview 2, rural school

Ana seems almost reluctant to admit her engagement with and interest in education. At one level she is keen to adopt the narrative that prioritises personal fulfilment and happiness, but she also recognises that educational capital is valuable. She begins by suggesting that attainment at school is not paramount however, she soon reveals that she places a high value on education and the opportunities it can provide (education is 'number one'). Elsewhere in the interview, she discusses recent school assemblies which have focused on themes such as the importance of character, learning from setbacks and reaching your potential rather than comparing yourself with others. However, Ana's life experiences to date are predicated on a philosophy that external achievements do matter. As the child of migrant parents, she talks of the sacrifice and upheaval involved in securing 'a better future' and imagines her own future as similarly purposeful. When she is asked what she thinks success will look like when she is in her thirties, she continues to talk about education.

> Obviously, have passed all the education I wanted and if not then still trying, perhaps going to a different school. Because now you have opportunities even when you're like fifty, you can still go to a different school, so if I don't pass that because –well even though you try the best not everyone's 'into' it. So, if I don't pass then I'd try to get somewhere else to try to get some other education, so that I can get to a good job. And probably finding a husband, getting together, having children and like, making a bigger family.
>
> Ana, interview 2, rural school

Over the course of this research period Ana grew in confidence and this came across in her interviews. Each time we met, her exam results were improving and her grades were higher than she had anticipated. Her commitment to pursuing further qualifications is shown by the different ways she imagines she may have to

achieve them, through going to a different school (or college) and persisting until she is much older. She views these qualifications as a means of getting 'a good job' that she is 'interested in'. This level of detail is a helpful insight and demonstrates the distinction which a number of young migrants made between themselves and their parents, who want to be successful and enjoy the work they do. Ana appears to have blended some of the different discourses of success, viewing happiness as important but also recognising the capacity of education to accelerate this route to 'success'. She concludes that the future will also incorporate her family, 'getting on well with my parents' and 'finding a husband'. Ana, like a number of young migrants in this study, is keen to emphasise education and family values. A theme which will be explored in greater depth below.

Piotr's experience is the second example to illustrate the tensions young people grapple with in thinking about success and their future options. Piotr was also born in Poland and moved to Scotland when he was in primary school. He also gains confidence during this period of transition and reflects philosophically on his personal growth and rapidly changing ideas of success.

> Once again, I had this metamorphosis! When I was 14, I was like I'm gonna be a free man! I'm just gonna be myself. I don't need people. Whereas now I feel, when I'm 33 I should be like –I don't know where I got this picture from – is it called the atomic family or something? But it's like, I would have a house –it's probably a fifties 'girl dream' – but I'd get a wife, I'd already start to get kids. I'd have my own house –not as in a Council House –well not a flat. I want a proper –my land, my house! Built, not by me directly, but paid for by my own money, so it's mine and it's my future.
>
> Piotr, interview 2, rural school

Piotr's focus is his family. Here he discusses how his own plans have changed over time where once he thought he would be an independent man, he now hopes to have a family and personalises this success ('my land', 'my house', 'my future'). Piotr says elsewhere that he isn't ambitious for his career, but would like to be surrounded by family, he jokes that this is 'probably a fifties girl dream'. His outlook is distinctive from many of his non-migrant peers who place a much greater focus on progression in their careers. In contrast, Piotr states, 'I think by 30 or 35, I might just give up my career' (interview 2) and suggests that he would rather 'plateau' and enjoy his family than work long days in a high paying job. This was distinctive, with most participants (minority ethnic and White Scottish) much more focussed

on the immediate acquisition of education and of progressing in a chosen career. These nuances may reflect that Piotr is familiar with increasingly popular narratives of success, which mark a shift away from conventional career pathways and towards more flexible working patterns which place emphasis on a work/life balance. However, as Piotr suggests, this could also be an artefact of his conservative upbringing and a desire to preserve values which he feels he is at risk of losing in Scotland. Later in the interview Piotr suggests that if he had been born in Scotland, and particularly if he had been born a girl, his outlook would be very different:

> If I was born here in Scotland [and a girl] I feel like I'd be a strong, independent young woman. I think that's very 'pushed' right now, I think it is a sudden change in the past five years that it's cool to be independent and single and not to do – just be myself and be my own person. Now there's nothing wrong with that, but I just feel like that is very idealised now. You know the stereotype of girls who used to *need* to get married - that used to be a thing - to a boy and the boy makes the money or whatever. But now I feel like people are pushed to be independent and some people may not have the capabilities to be independent. I feel like two people who can't be independent, make a dependent couple, that somehow just require each other. I think you're pushed to be independent whereas it's not –you shouldn't be pushed to be anything. You should be able to choose whatever you want to be.
>
> Piotr, interview 2, rural school

Over the course of the interviews Piotr is keen to point out areas of commonality between himself and his Scottish peers, but he also draws some distinctions. Here he resists what he sees as a 'push' towards independence and individualism and suggests that 'people may not have the capabilities to be independent'. Interestingly, he uses the language of choice which dominates discourses of success ('you shouldn't be pushed', 'you should be able to choose') to argue for a distinctive vision of success. In many ways, Piotr's vision of progress sounds remarkably conventional. He argues that society should be less individual and self-reliant and more dependent with a stronger sense of community.

Together, Ana and Piotr demonstrate the challenge of balancing competing ideas and experiences of success. Both participants demonstrate the complexity of defining success and planning for the future; negotiating external expectations alongside their own ideas which can also shift and change over time. Like a number of young migrants in this study, Ana and Piotr demonstrate that they have been shaped by their Scottish peers who prioritise broader conceptions of success as

well as the current educational climate which focuses on character and confidence, as well as qualifications. However, they also seek to resist elements of this narrative and draw on their own experiences. This often results in contested ideas of success which can shift and change during transition. Young migrants simultaneously incorporate aspects of their upbringing, whilst balancing notions of individualised success and personal choice which have been promoted in school. These findings add to the evidence that young people from migrant and minority backgrounds do have distinctive narratives of success, which may explain some of the variation in the outcomes of school leavers, discussed earlier in the chapter.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter set out to explain the factors which influence the educational outcomes of school leavers in Scotland. The destination, or activity of young people immediately after school, was used as a starting point for analysis and the concept of a 'model school leaver' was explored with study participants. Findings shows that ethnicity, gender and material deprivation all have a bearing on educational outcomes. Ethnic background was highly correlated with attending university after leaving school. All minority ethnic groups (apart from White Poles) showed a higher probability of progressing to Higher Education than White Scottish pupils. However, there were large differences between ethnic groups, with Asian Chinese and Asian Bangladeshi the most likely to attend Higher Education (74 per cent and 60 per cent respectively), while only 41 per cent of White Other and 30 per cent of White Polish pupils progressed to Higher Education. Statistical models were fitted to try and explain the reasons for these ethnic differences. After controlling for a range of factors and exploring hierarchies within the data through a multilevel model, it was still not possible to statistically account for the differences in the outcomes of school leavers by ethnicity. Therefore, qualitative evidence has been used alongside the quantitative findings to explore narratives of success and how these vary by ethnic background.

Focus group and repeat interviews in two schools provided a parallel analysis of similar questions using qualitative methodologies. These were used to assess

whether young people aim for different destinations, shift their ideas of success over time and whether pupils from a migrant background define future success differently. The chapter found that many White Scottish participants rejected the notion that success is linked to educational outcomes and career paths. Educational success was defined more broadly as being 'happy' or 'achieving your personal goals'. However, these narratives of alternative forms of success were often inconsistent and contradictory. For example, conventional markers of educational success such as going to university and getting good grades at school were clearly paramount to many participants, particularly students from a British Asian background. These findings are mirrored in the quantitative results which show a higher probability of Asian/Black students attending Higher Education, regardless of socio-economic background. Although this was not unique to young Asian participants in the study, the singular focus on university and the passion with which this narrative was rehearsed and repeated was distinctive.

Secondly, the longitudinal nature of the research provided insights into the changes which occur during the course of transition. These changes were fuelled by a range of factors and showed that statistics often hide a more complex human picture. This dynamic period is also full of expectations, with some students resisting pressure to conform whilst others initially asserting themselves using the language of 'choice' but quickly realising their options are limited by circumstances or the weight of expectation. Finally, the analysis turned to reviewing whether young migrants define future success differently. Here a tension was observed, between conforming to the narratives of success which are rehearsed at school and through their peer networks, which sees success as personal, individual and focuses on having a plan. Or adhering to an alternative perspective which prizes external measures of success such as gaining qualifications and going to university. These students appeared to negotiate these competing ideas and develop their own imaginaries of success. This analysis has demonstrated that the destinations of school leavers is further complicated by divergent constructions of success; with many British Asian students prioritising Higher Education, White Scottish participants focusing on reaching one's own potential and knowing where they were going and finally migrants appearing to adopt a hybrid of these perspectives with complex ideas about success. This first research question has shown that outcomes are influenced by a range of complex factors, including how success itself is understood by young people from a range of migrant and minority

backgrounds. The next chapter will move beyond examining the outcome of school leavers and focus on the lived-experience of transition. It addresses the second research question and asks how does migrant and minority background shape experiences of educational transition?

Chapter 6 Drivers of difference: What shapes experiences of educational transition?

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the outcomes of school leavers in Scotland. It used quantitative and qualitative analysis to explore the significant differences in destinations across ethnic groups and scrutinised perceptions of success. The key points to emerge from this analysis were the persistence in ethnic differences, even when accounting for a range of individual, school and regional factors. Analysis of longitudinal qualitative analysis revealed how definitions of success vary between school leavers and can change throughout the course of school transition.

This chapter sets out to understand the factors which influence the experiences and aspirations of school leavers in Scotland, with particular emphasis on migrant young people. Thus, the focus moves from outcomes to the lived experiences of transition. Educational transition is defined in this study as the period of decision making which takes place at the end of compulsory education. As highlighted in Chapter 2, in Scotland, the minimum school leaving age is 16, this is much earlier than in many other countries, including England, where young people are required to remain in education or training until they are 18 (see Section 2.2). This dynamic period of decision-making is important because there has been a growing divergence in the nature of school-to-work transitions (Bynner, 2005; Schoon, 2015). With scholars pointing to a growing separation between 'slow' and 'fast' transitions: young people whose families can afford for them to continue in education take a slower route into the labour market by spending longer in education and delaying their adulthood; young people from less privileged backgrounds are more likely to take a faster route, leaving full-time education at a younger age, entering the labour market and assuming adult roles earlier (Jones, 2002; Roberts, 2011). Evidence of these divergent pathways and the significant impact they can have on future earnings and opportunities have been observed in Scotland (Eisenstadt, 2016; Ralston et al., 2016). However, to date, research has

focused on the socio-economic backgrounds of young people. In this study, which is framed within theoretical debates about inequalities and social justice, this chapter focuses on another axis of difference, the role of migration history. Ethnic and migrant background is relevant to these debates given the context of growing cultural and ethnic diversity in Scotland and lack of existing research of educational transition for young people with a migrant background in Scotland.

The chapter begins by reviewing the literature on educational transitions and establishing the need for further research into the lived experiences of young people with a migrant history in Scotland. Next, analysis of the qualitative work reveals the influence migration history can have on educational transitions by focusing on three major themes to emerge in the literature. The first theme explores the significance of family support and expectations. The second highlights evidence which shows that young migrants can learn resilience and flexibility through their migration experience and third reveals the importance of migrant identity in shaping transition. The chapter draws these findings together and reflects on the contribution it makes to the body of knowledge in this area and implications for future research.

6.1.1 Understanding educational transitions

As outlined earlier in the thesis, transition to adulthood is a critical period within the life course. It is shaped by individual factors and macro-level conditions and can have long term implications for individuals, families and the labour market as well as wider society (Fernández-Reino, 2016; Hills, 2010; Treanor, 2012). According to Schoon, it is a period laden with risk, fluid and formative (Schoon & Lyons-Amos, 2016). Unsurprisingly, youth transitions have been an important focus of educational research as well as more broadly in disciplines such as geography, psychology and economics. The language of post-school transition has shifted over time; terms like ‘pathways’ ‘journeys’ and ‘trajectories’ have all sought to encapsulate a period which is inherently fluid, de-standardised and increasingly diverse (Cote & Levine, 2015). Large scale, longitudinal datasets (such as the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England or LSYPE) have sought to capture

how lives unfold over time, challenging assumptions around the linearity of the life course and supporting the move away from a crude, age-specific life stage model (Billari & Liefbroer, 2010; Elder & Crosnoe, 2003; Liefbroer & Toulemon, 2010). Overall, these large empirical studies remain vital in broadening our understanding of trends in transition over time and space. The objective of this research is to complement these large-scale studies with rich qualitative work in specific locations with a diverse sample of participants. This complements the approaches listed above by providing rich individual accounts of the lived experience of transition. This chapter foregrounds the voice of young people themselves (rather than parents, teachers or policy makers). It sets out to capture the everyday encounters of young people as they leave school. This is important because educational transitions have long term implications for individuals, their families and society, feeding into wider debates about social mobility and the (re)production of inequality in society.

6.1.2 Young migrants in transition

For all young people the period of decision making prior to the end of compulsory education is an important time. A period when they will be "reflecting on who they are (their beings), who they can be (their becomings) and where and who they do/will feel attached to (their belongings)" (Tyrrell et al., 2018; 9). Research reviewed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2 and 3.3) has shown that experiences of transition (as well as educational outcomes) can be differentiated by background, including ethnic and migrant history. For some school leavers this period represents a period of growing independence and an opportunity to fulfil their aspirations and pursue personal ambitions. However, recent research into citizenship and belonging in childhood has revealed that the process of growing up in Britain can feel increasingly uncertain, particularly during the negotiations around Brexit (Botterill, 2018; King, 2017). Anti-immigrant discourses have gained momentum and incidents of racism in the UK are on the rise (Burnett, 2017). In this context, understanding the lived experience of Scotland's migrant school leavers is increasingly important. It has implications for equality and social justice which are key theoretical framings for this study, and promises to shed light on

migrant transition at a critical time of rupture (Owen, 2018; Tyrrell et al., 2018) and geopolitical change (Botterill, 2018; King, 2018).

Analysis in this chapter draws on longitudinal qualitative fieldwork with school leavers from a range of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds in two distinct areas of Scotland (see Chapter 4). In contrast to the previous chapter, the focus narrows to draw predominantly from the narratives of young people who have moved to the UK as children (referred to throughout the chapter as young migrants). It argues that paying particular attention to the narratives of young migrants experiencing transition offers an original contribution to scholarship on youth transition and comes at a critical period in the cultural and political history of the UK. This focus on the significance of the migrant experience in transition has emerged from the analysis of the entire cohort of participants – composed of young people from White British, Asian, White Other and Mixed and Multiple ethnic backgrounds – thereby enabling a comparative perspective. Extensive analysis of all the data (field notes, interviews, written and video evidence gathered through focus groups) generated many unifying themes about experiences of transition (see Coding Tree, Appendix M). These topics, alongside the critical review of the literature, have culminated in three broad themes which are discussed in this chapter. They are the significance of family support and expectations, the impact of the migration process and finally the changing nature of migrant identity through transition.

6.2 Family support and expectations

The theme of *family* surfaced regularly in the fieldwork, in part because of the age of participants who all lived at home. However, this went beyond the household to wider family networks, highlighting the importance of these less frequent connections in shaping transition through school and aspirations for the future. Family conflict and/or support was referred to in interviews with young people from both migrant and non-migrant backgrounds. Participants referred to themes such as parenting styles, comparisons with siblings, connections with grandparents as well as the importance of uncles, aunts and cousins facilitating work experience opportunities and being a sounding board for careers advice. Despite its relevance

as a theme across all the interviews, migrant young people frequently framed family relations in distinctive ways. For example, demonstrating strong sense of responsibility for their parents and describing the impact of their parents' decision to move and the corresponding expectations of educational success. These themes are revisited and evidenced in the paragraphs which follow. The paragraphs below highlight how the nature of familial support among young people with a migrant background is distinctive in two ways: first transition is marked with an awareness of family responsibilities, to support their parents both now and in the future; second, transition is framed by family expectations.

6.2.1 Family responsibilities: supporting parents

The concept of filial piety, the attitude of duty and respect for family members, has been examined through the literature in chapter 2. Research by Fuligni and Tseng (2017) observed its existence among teenage migrants from a range of different ethnic backgrounds in their US study. This commitment to family was also a discourse that remained remarkably consistent across the interviews with young migrants in this study. It was clearly illustrated in an interview with Reyna a newly arrived student from the Philippines. Her educational transition seemed secondary to the enormity of the physical, cultural and emotional transitions which she was experiencing. At the first interview, she explained that her father had settled in the UK ten years ago while she lived with relatives in the Philippines, and her new life in Scotland was proving a shock. Reyna described the mix of emotions involved in being separated from loved ones, whether her parents when she was in the Philippines or currently when she lives at a distance to her relatives who raised her. However, the personal cost of migration is downplayed and instead, she links her future to that of the fortunes of her family. When Reyna is asked about her plans for the future, she prioritises her responsibility towards her family:

> I would be working and helping my families in the Philippines ... [so] I can pay for my parents for as they are getting old. I would be living with my dreams and having families and probably get to spend time with my family and then pay all the rent and just sit there and like bring all the memories I had and all the trials that I went and that became with it.
>
> Reyna, interview 2, urban school

Reyna refers to her own aspirations but her primary framing appears to be commitment to family. The reference to paying the rent underscores the financial as well as emotional support she expects to provide her family in the future. Reyna couples an emphasis on toil and sacrifice for others with a sense of satisfaction and the ability to sit and reflect on the experiences she has had. Reyna projects a strong sense of responsibility and shows no desire to desist or defer these more collectivist ideals, as she plans her future in the UK. This emphasis on financially supporting parents was not a feature in any of the interviews with White Scottish participants whilst a number of participants with migrant backgrounds revisit the theme across multiple interviews. Another participant, Piotr (whose understandings of success were discussed in the previous chapter) was born in Poland and like Reyna he also interweaves personal and familial plans for future.

> It would also be my dream to save up and buy my Mum a house! I could buy her a Summer house in Greece and just take care of it the whole year! I feel like that would be –well my mum she always love the warmth and I feel like sending her on holiday would be really good!
>
> Piotr, interview 2, rural school

Piotr's facial expression changed as he describes his dream to purchase a holiday home for his mother. In each interview, reference to his parents elicits a strong emotional reaction. Piotr appears conflicted that his parents have undergone hardship to ensure his future will be more secure. This quote underscores his determination to reverse the traditional parent-child role and support his parents as they get older. In Piotr's case this sense of responsibility also drives his focus on education and his approach to the future. As noted in the literature, recognising parental sacrifices can have a motivating impact on the children of migrants, influencing educational attainment and their plans for the future (Dreby & Stutz, 2012). Piotr, in the quote below, illustrates this clearly. He is asked what difference he feels migration has had on his outlook and aspirations for the future and responds –

> I feel like because I see my Mum working this hard, I see her coming back and her legs are sore because she walked all the way home. I feel like I'm determined to not be it. I'm not saying my Mum is failure or anything, I feel like she provided a perfectly happy childhood, to me but I feel like I don't want to have those problems, it makes me –and I don't think I realised it until like, you think about it, but nobody thinks about 'oh I see that, this makes me do this.' But when I think about it, it makes me not want to do that. Like, I see my Dad working too, working hard and coming in dirty from whatever he's working on. I just don't want to be that. That's why I feel like that what made me want to go into Ethical Hacking. It might be subconscious, we're going into psychology here! But I shunned away from that, computers are the complete opposite of working on a building site, it's sitting at a computer looking at a screen! Doing internet stuff, that's the opposite of being a builder.
>
> Piotr, interview 2, rural school

It seems that this is not a begrudging connection to family, but a motivating influence. Piotr begins to define himself and his future direction in reference to his parents. As he describes the everyday reality of transition, Piotr's experiences are marked by what he observes about the daily routine for his parents; the physicality of his father's role and the toil of his mother's long walk home. Piotr indicates that the choices he is in the process of making are designed to resist the embodied reality of his parents' experiences. Over the course of the interviews, Piotr begins to question if these are deliberate decisions or are pursued unconsciously. He positions his plans as distinctive from the roles undertaken by his parents and seems to feel their migrant identity has played a central role in this. Similar discourses were evident in the interviews with Fabio, Lucas and Hamida who, like Reyna and Piotr, had a strong sense of commitment and responsibility for their parents, and a recognition of the challenges that migration brought their parents.

6.2.2 Family expectations: repaying a debt

In the case of Reyna and Piotr, family responsibility was portrayed positively and remained largely unquestioned. For others, the sense of responsibility was less evident and instead the term *expectation* was used more commonly. Interviews with White Scottish participants also discussed parental expectations, with young people either viewing this as additional pressure or embracing it as a form of support. For young people from a migrant background, this sense of expectation

was often more nuanced and conflicted in nature because it was accompanied with a sense of guilt or at least heightened awareness of the sacrifices made by parents. The quote below illustrates this point.

> I'm trying to do my best because I know that my Mum brought me here to get my education … because it's for me then I feel like I have to give her back, to make her happy [pause] well kind of ... Well not really happy, but be like mmm, look at that – told you! Everyone will be like, oh, I'm so smart [laughs] So my relatives in Russia will see –look at me I've got my head in education and I went to university.
>
> Sasha, interview 1, rural school

Sasha was born in Russia and has moved to Scotland less than a year prior to this interview. In the quote above, she describes her future using the language of repayment. She suggests that her own education was the primary reason for moving and therefore she has a responsibility to meet these expectations. She is keen to make her mum happy and knows that the sense of family honour which will be shared by relatives in Russia if she progresses to university. Sasha also hints here of the desire for her family to prove themselves as migrants, not merely to the society they have joined but also to family members 'left behind'. Sasha visualises a time when they will be able to say, 'look at that – told you!' This connects to research by McAreavey (2017) on migrants in Northern Ireland, which suggests migrants can feel torn because they are seen as a 'hero at home' (country of origin) and a 'loser at destination'. In this instance, Sasha's experience points to a more complex scenario where she is not universally accepted as a hero by her family in Russia and this identity needs to somehow be upheld and maintained through educational success.

This awareness of the responsibility of young migrants to repay a debt to their parents was also a theme which was noticed and discussed by White Scottish participants in the study. During the second interview all participants were asked to reflect on whether their experiences of transition and plans for the future might have been different had they been born into a different background (socio-economic, ethnic, geographic background). Participants responded with fascinating insights which will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter on intersections. However, pertinent to this theme of family expectations is a quote from Kieran. Kieran is from a White Scottish background and at the time of the first two interviews attended the rural school and by the third he was working in a local

restaurant. When asked about how life might be different if he had moved to the UK from Bangladesh, he responds by immediately discussing the influence of family.

> I don't think this is racist what I'm going to say, I've noticed that people with parents from a different country, erm, they really push their kids to do better. So, I feel like if I was born to a Bangladeshi family, I would definitely grow up to be a doctor or something. I feel that's definitely what they push their children to do. I've seen that in all cultures… Because their parents growing up has not been the best –like in Bangladesh it's not the most economically thriving place in the world and they want better for their kids. I'm not saying it's wrong, but I've seen it. It can be pushy but yeah [trails off]
>
> Kieran, interview 2, rural school

Kieran prefaces his remark with a concern that he will be construed as a racist, showing his sensitivity to discussing the differences he has observed. This theme will be revisited in the Discussion (Chapter 8). Kieran then describes the family expectations which have been exemplified in the quote by Sasha. He claims not view the aspirations as wrong but notes that he has observed this in other cultures. Unlike many of his peers Kieran has lived abroad, most recently attending school in Germany. His parents are in the military and he contrasts their expectations 'I just think they want me to be me' (Kieran, interview 2) with those of his peers with a migrant background – interestingly, he is a close friend of Sasha's. This exchange is fascinating, although his observation was not unique (other White Scottish participants provided similar responses) and is a common representation of migrant parents. Migrants were commonly viewed as 'ambitious' and 'striving' and the social, economic and cultural differences between families were overlooked. Kieran demonstrates his uneasiness at discussing difference. On the surface it might seem he is well placed to discuss such differences (having lived abroad and having a diverse friendship group) however he hesitates and eventually trails away. Kieran's focus seems to be the end goal (being a doctor) rather than what it might be like to experience transition and to juggle competing expectations whilst making important decisions about the future. A theme which will be explored further in the next section on the significance of the migrant experience.

This section has discussed the twin emphases on family responsibilities and expectations which were found to be distinctive features of transition for young people from a migrant background. It has also provided an insight into perceptions

of non-migrant young people, which can focus on the expectations of migrant parents rather than the lived reality of transition for young migrants themselves. The narratives of Reyna, Piotr and Sasha provide an insight into the everyday experiences of making decisions during this period of educational transition and how family responsibility and expectations can shape this process.

6.3 Learning lessons through the migration experience

For a number of participants migration to Scotland was the second or third international move in their life time, having lived in countries as diverse as the New Zealand, the Netherlands, Cyprus, Italy and the United States before arriving in Scotland. Thus, the young people in this study with a migrant background have had extraordinary experiences compared to their peers. In this context, educational transition was often a curious topic to these individuals who, in some cases, had begun to embrace and relish change, and for whom transition was normal rather than something to discuss. This was unexpected. Intriguingly, the impact of migration was often underplayed and hard for them to articulate. Direct questions proved unfruitful so the examples which follow were often unprompted and naturally illustrated the resilience and flexibility which had been developed unknowingly, through the individual's migration process. Sasha demonstrates in the extract below what was typical of many participants, the sense that migration has been 'good for them', but struggles to fully explain why. This optimism about the future was grounded in the fact they had moved.

6.3.1 Change as the new norm

The migration literature is full of examples of migrants learning to adapt and adjust to rapidly changing circumstances. The impact this can have on young people in the education system has been discussed in the literature review (see Chapter 3). The fieldwork provided examples of the multitude of ways the migration experience

has influenced participants. Change was often normalised and therefore discussing it became hard to describe.

Sasha arrived early for her second interview and stayed until a bell sounded for the end of the lesson. She was keen to discuss her experiences of life in S5 and her plans for the coming months. During the interview, she was asked to reflect on how her experience of migration may be shaping her plans for the future. Predictably, this was a difficult question and one she struggles to articulate.

Helen So, if you had not had your life experiences – in Russia, in Cyprus – do you think your plans for the future would look different?
Sasha I think so!
Helen Tell me more.
Sasha If I was born here in [town]?
Helen Yes
Sasha I don't know, I think that it would be different.
Helen In what way?
Sasha I think I would be worse. I wouldn't be as keen on my grades, I would be like 'I don't really care' you know. I would be like [people from the town]! [laughs] Sorry!
Helen You think you would have 'been worse'?
Sasha Yeah, I wouldn't care about my grades. Same if I had stayed in Russia, I would have never got my grades.
Helen Really?
Sasha Yes because moving country just –I don't even know. If I had stayed in Russia I feel like it wouldn't be good for me or if I was born here and I had stayed here my whole life it wouldn't be good for me as well.
Helen So what made the difference?
Sasha Probably migration because I experienced a lot. I'm trying to do my best because I know that my mum brought me here to get my education, so I would have felt really guilty for that. Yeah.

Sasha, interview 2, rural school

The impact of migration has shaped Sasha in ways she finds hard to formulate and yet she is unequivocal. Sasha presents two options, that of immobility ('if I was born here' or 'had stayed in Russia') and mobility ('moving country') and like other participants in the study is convinced on the benefits of migration. Sasha asserts that without the moves (to Cyprus first and then Scotland) her life chances would be different, 'it wouldn't be good for me' she states. When pressed further on why and what made the difference, she responds, 'I experienced a lot' and links this immediately to education, tying closely to the previous section of family expectations.

For other participants, the experience of migration was even more recent (months rather than years) and therefore the impact of it even harder to discuss. In several cases participants were keen to discuss their life changing moves but struggled to articulate in English how they felt. A number of practical tools helped, including google translate and sign language, however asking about the first day at school often produced a passionate and extended response. Often providing a snapshot of the significance of the migration experience on educational transitions. Fabio attended the urban school at the time of the first and second interview. His family had moved within Brazil, then to Italy and Germany and finally to Scotland. I asked him about his first day at the school he was now attending in a Scottish city.

> I feel alone. So alone. Coz I didn't know nothing here, nothing, absolutely nothing! On first day just alone, alone, alone. Just me and me! [laugh] and God, please God! I had one friend on second day I just have one friend Portuguese friend.
>
> Fabio, interview 1, urban school.

Like a number of other participants Fabio describes the isolation and loneliness of being in a new school where he doesn't speak the language. He is asked how this compared with his experiences of moving within Brazil and he responds, 'I was scared, but I could speak my language, I could express my feelings and I can talk with the teachers. I can talk in Portuguese!' (Fabio, interview 1). The barrier of language learning was highlighted by several students and this was often coupled with the need for friendship group. Fabio quickly mentions the importance of peers and his ability to find a Portuguese pupil on his second day. This combination of not speaking the language but finding support in friendships often led pupils to have a sense of responsibility for new arrivals to the school who do not speak English. Another participant in the same school discusses this in her first interview.

> When I first came here –I can't stand it here. I missed my family in Bangladesh and lots of friends in my school. The culture is different here. Everything is different in Bangladesh and here! … After one month and fifteen days, or twenty days then I got used to in the school.
>
> I have now two friends in this school – one is a Scottish friend, one is a Pakistani friend, one is an Indian friend and that is it. It's good to have India and Pakistan. Yeah, now when Asian country people come to school I'll help too.
>
> Hamida, interview 1, urban school

Hamida, describes the challenges associated with moving to Scotland –missing her network of family and friends as well as finding herself in a different culture. Yet, like Fabio the turning point (which she tries to pin down accurately in terms of weeks and days) is connected to her newly established friendships. Her circle of friends remains small, but throughout the interview she refers to them and talks about how they are able to welcome new people to the school. As pupils, approaching the end of compulsory education, these networks are supporting them through this period of decision making and change. Unsurprisingly perhaps, the narratives of Fabio, Hamida and Sasha demonstrate that migration experience can have a profound impact on experiences of transition including the formation of peer groups, developing awareness of others and a hard-to-articulate sense that migration has been 'good for them'. The sections which follow highlight specific skills and capacities which were evident in the transition narratives of the young migrants in this study.

6.3.2 Skills, confidence and contingency planning

The extensive fieldwork in this project provided an insight into the changes in confidence which take place during transition. Although the analysis has generated many recurring themes, it has also been effective in demonstrating that young migrants are a heterogenous group with a wide range of experiences and outlooks. Differences were noted between ethnic/national groups as well as within them and this complexity is illustrated clearly when discussing the idea of skills and confidence. Whilst Fabio, Hamida and others describe the challenge of settling into school, others cast their migration experience a more positive light. Indeed, some interviews showed that the migration experience often supports an increase in confidence and a range of skills which young migrants feel a sense of pride in.

The challenge of learning a new language was a common topic in the interviews. A number of participants described the sense of achievement at having mastered a new language and the confidence is developed as a result. Lili is asked how transition might be different if she had been born in the UK:

> I wouldn't ever be able to learn Hungarian! [laughs] I am actually happy that I wasn't born here. It might sound a bit weird. I actually like where I'm from … everyone says it's cool and I've got a cool accent. I like speaking other languages and I feel that is a success.
>
> Lili, interview 2, rural school.

Lili views her skills as a linguist with pride. Despite the challenges associated with her personal migrant experience she sees speaking other languages as a marker of success. This was echoed by several participants who had then been motivated to learn additional languages. Here, Ana describes her disbelief at her own exam results, the sense of achievement and the decision to study Spanish. All this is rooted in the confidence she has developed through adapting to a new culture and language in Scotland.

> Achieving the grades that I got from coming from Poland to here is shocking! I am making myself a challenge of taking Spanish next year! Even though I'm already speaking another language –I feel like I can't do it –but you know I did it first time so why can I not do it again?
>
> Ana, interview 2, rural school

This idea of challenge expressed by Ana is an important one. She seems unfazed by the prospect of a new challenge, particularly one which she knows she has mastered in the past. This sense of growing confidence and willingness to take on new challenges was not evident in all participants, many of whom admitted that their confidence levels seem to have dipped over time. This anxiety about losing confidence through transition was more common among students from White Scottish backgrounds, but there were exceptions. Here Bonnie, a White Scottish participant discusses her growing sense of confidence.

> Like, my confidence I would say is a lot better than it was. I used to be really really bad. So doing these things like work experience and working has made me a lot more confident with talking to people and, you know, gaining normal human skills. As well as that, it's also good to be earning money!
>
> Bonnie, interview 1, rural school

Like many of her migrant peers, Bonnie has experienced a growing sense of confidence through transition. She describes acquiring 'normal human skills' through getting a part time job and undertaking work experience at a local primary school. Bonnie is not from an affluent background and has not travelled extensively

she has taken up a series of opportunities which she feels has had a positive impact on her confidence. Together, these insights demonstrate the impact which moving can have on skills and confidence during transition. However, it is also clear that these can also be acquired through a range of other experiences.

The need for flexibility and a readiness to make contingency plans were also characteristic of many of the young people with a migrant background as they navigated their educational transitions. Lucas, a Polish student with a passion for IT and computing describes his career plans. Like some of his non-migrant peers, he is positive about the future, but also demonstrates realism and openness for things not to go the way he expects.

> I know that Gaming can be a tedious thing and there's a lot more Accounting and tedious work that goes into it than meets the eye. I know it's set out to be a glorious job and I know it might not be. With the Computing job I plan to get, I could go into different areas like Banking, with my Maths and Physics as well and stuff like that. I just hope to advance in whatever field I go into. I just have –some might say a pessimistic view, but I think it's more of a realistic view or an optimistic pessimistic look on life. I can say, well okay if this happens then there's a possibility of it turning out this way or that way or if that might happen then I might be able to go on to this, and I just think in terms of a few steps ahead! I try to pick the best route for me in terms of longevity.
>
> Lucas, interview 1, rural school.

Lucas interweaves his ambitious plans for the future with a sense of realism, recognising that things may not turn out the way he expects. He appears to strategically think 'a few steps ahead'. Arguably these are qualities which many other young people might demonstrate so this is tested. Lucas is asked directly whether he feels his background has influenced this.

> I think if I wasn't brought up the way I was then I might not be as flexible, but I think I'd still have the high expectations I do. Because I –now since I've been to so many countries I don't think it really matters where I work and if my work requires travel or me to learn another language or something like that, where I have to keep moving then I don't think I would have an issue with that. But if I had stayed in one place most of my life I probably would have grown more sentimental and I would have probably preferred to be in a more stationary [inaudible] but of course it might have had the opposite effect where I can't stay in one place and maybe I'd wanna be a trip advisor or something.
>
> Lucas, interview 1, rural school.

In this quote Lucas describes high expectations, again linking to an earlier section, however he also describes the flexibility he has developed. He specifically discusses the role of migration and his openness to travel, learn a new language and to settle elsewhere. Like Sasha earlier, Lucas hypothesises that had he been less mobile as a child he might have been 'more sentimental' and less mobile as an adult. Lucas clearly links his flexibility to his migration experience.

However, not all participants were as optimistic about the migration experience. Interviewees often reflected on the family they have left behind and the loss of friends and familiarity. Amelia, a Lithuanian participant in the study puts it succinctly in her first interview saying, 'No one chooses to migrate! I haven't seen my family in five years. I wouldn't choose to do that.' (Amelia, urban school, interview 1). Similarly, Lili who had been so positive in the first interview about her migration experience, describes how through transition things are getting harder.

> I didn't have a choice to move or not. I moved out [of Hungary] because my mum took me and I was twelve so I couldn't really stay. I was happy, actually, to move out. When you're here for longer and longer, when you're from another country, you start to feel worse and worse and worse because you miss home more and family. So, it doesn't get better and better, but it gets worse and worse from year to years.
>
> Lili, interview 3, rural school

During the three interviews with Lili, she provides a sober description of life as a young migrant growing up in Scotland, one which gets harder over time and not easier. Yet, she also highlights the complexity of her love/hate relationship with her migratory experiences. Her responses are often interspersed with humour and positivity and, like Sasha, she can see how moving has shaped her. Throughout the fieldwork, Lili expresses her dislike for the town she lives in and makes every effort to distinguish herself from her British peers. However, in the second interview she begins to contemplate a future living in Scotland. She suggests that her experiences of migration have been the training ground for further flexibility and future mobility. Like many participants (from all backgrounds) she describes 'keeping her options open' and yet for her options seem even broader and less certain than her Scottish born peers. The quote below epitomises the range of possibilities open to Lili and her uncertainty about the path ahead.

> I'm not sure if I'm going to go to university here. I've got a first plan –either I'm staying here in university for a bit –but won't be here for ever I know that. Or I'm gonna go to Spain and learn the language and go to university there or I've got a plan that I might move back to Hungary and try life there. Because I've never really lived in Hungary, I mean I did when I was like, younger. So, I could try myself and work there but if it didn't work I would probably go to Spain.
>
> Lili, interview 2, rural school

She repeats her plan, adding more specific details in the third interview.

> So, I'm not sure if I'm going to go to university in Glasgow because I've also got a plan that I'm going to go to university in Hungary to try my life there. It depends what's going to happen and how I feel in a year. I'm going to apply in Glasgow as well as in Hungary.
>
> Lili, interview 3, rural school

Despite the challenge of living in Scotland, she still sees remaining here as her primary plan and ties this to similar ideas of moving to Hungary or Spain. Lilli exemplifies the uncertainty and opportunity associated with transnational young people who retain links to both location and in many cases identify strongly with multiple locations. Lili has multiple plans, in different locations, undertaking different activities. Some of the decisions will made for her by her grades, her Mum's plans to move to Glasgow and the availability of opportunity. She holds this tension of uncertainty and not knowing very calmly and without the anxiety one might expect. Contingency plans seem to be at the core of her transition experience and to be a result of her migratory experience, despite the hardship she has endured.

This section has given voice to the experiences of migrant young people as they articulate their experiences of transition. They demonstrate the specific skills, confidence and contingency planning which, it has been argued, is a consequence of their migrant experiences. The narratives have also demonstrated that not all migrant experience is uniform, with some participants gaining confidence and others losing it. Finally, the examples above illustrate the intimate, but often understated, connection between experiences of transition, future plans and the meaning-laden process of migration.

6.4 Evolving migrant identities

Having explored the importance of family support and expectations and the specific skills gained through the migration experience, this final section turns to examine the role of migrant identity in shaping the transition to adulthood. It examines how the participants in this study assert, construct and resist their migrant identity in the transition to adulthood. The section demonstrates how migrant identity shifts over time and across space. These highlight evidence of cosmopolitan capital (through the experiences of Lucas and Amelia) and the need to juggle national and local identity (through the experiences of Ali and Ana) and living life 'in between' (Piotr).

6.4.1 Migrant identity shifting over time

This chapter has already highlighted that it was often difficult for participants to articulate the difference being a migrant was making to their beings, becomings and belongings. The process was hard to articulate and quantify. However, several young people were able to describe the ways in which they could harness intangible capital which had been gained through migration. Deriving a sense of confidence from their identity and using it as form of capital. Over time, this was enacted and performed in various ways and migrant identity was used as leverage in some situations. Here Lucas discusses his citizenship.

> Well, at parties for example saying that I'm American - leading with that - is the cooler thing to do because they hear my accent and they're like 'oh yeah, I thought so!' Then I hit them with the 'oh yeah but I'm Polish as well, I speak two languages' … So, at times I call myself American Polish and more recently with the Trump election I call myself Polish American, [laughs] generally I don't find myself to be one or the other. I don't find myself tied to a country.
>
> Lucas, interview 1, rural school

Lucas refers to two sources of capital, his ability to speak to languages and his dual national identity. Further, the interview took place in February 2016, a month after US President Donald Trump was inaugurated. The media was filled with

polemics around his competency and the likely impact of his presidency. Lucas responds with cool self-assurance. He is capable of shifting between his identities depending on the situation. He states that ‘I don’t find myself tied to a country’ echoing the language used in the literature about the cosmopolitan elite; transnationalism which allows the individual to operate across the usual confines of nation states (Castles & Miller, 2009; Rovisco, 2016; Rovisco & Nowicka, 2011). Cosmopolitanism has frequently been viewed as being the preserve of the global elite (Nowicka & Ramin, 2016). Here, however, this same outlook is being exemplified by the son of a lorry driver living in rural Scotland. Lucas describes how he uses this technique at parties and in conversation with people from the UK, it shows powerfully the connection between the local and the global; a very personal statement about his own identity is a lightning rod, instantly connected to the seismic shifts on the geopolitical landscape. This use of cosmopolitan capital to gain distinction is a fascinating development which requires greater exploration in future research. In particular, what predisposes some migrants to construct and harness this capital if, as has been assumed, it is not simply a classed process and confined to an educated elite.

The longitudinal nature of the research allowed insight into how young people in transition assert and construct their identities over time. Lucas was still at school in the second interview, however by the final interview he had left school and was attending university. The quote below sheds light on how his identity has shifted through this period of transition.

> As I mentioned in our earlier meetings, I've been trying to expand my social skills, and it has paid off. I've met many new people here and I do not feel really special anymore, I used to be the interesting one who spoke another language and wasn't Scottish, there's a wide variety of people from just about all corners of the globe. The fact that we're so close to Uni just increases the number of people I get to meet.
>
> Lucas, interview 3, rural school

Lucas discusses the transition which has taken place since we last met. The move to university, where he feels his investment in his social skills has paid off. His friendship group has widened, and he is candid about how this has influenced his identity. The contrast between his small rural town and a city is stark for Lucas, who admits he no longer feels special or unique. Like many university students,

his horizons have widened, and his migrant identity no longer feels as prominent as it once did. This was a sentiment shared by several students who by the final interview were at university and mixing with people from a much broader range of backgrounds. Here Amelia describes her shifting experience of being Lithuanian.

> Since coming to uni, I am almost ready to embrace my Lithuanian identity again. I've met Indians, Singaporeans and Poles and everyone in between. There are other people out there. I'm no longer different.
>
> Amelia, interview 3, urban school

Amelia had struggled through school with bullying and feeling different. Here, in the final interview she is willing to embrace her Lithuanian identity. An identity which until recently she had wanted to conceal.

6.4.2 Juggling national and local identity

A number of studies, particularly in the geographic literature have examined the importance of the different spaces implicit in young people's transitions (Moskal, 2015; Valentine, 2003). It is this sense of place which is the focus of this section, which emerges from several interviews where place and space were mentioned in reference to an evolving migrant identity.

This sense of place and the elusive quest to find where you fit came up in a number of other interviews. Ana describes vividly how her sense of place and belonging has changed over time. In the quote below she describes her growing sense of 'Scottish-ness' and a shift in her identity. Her comments highlight the places where this difference is felt most acutely, for Ana it is the house where her grandmother now lives.

> At the start I felt different, but now I know more people and I don't feel like it. No, I feel like a part of Scotland to be honest. I feel more Scottish than Polish, I have to say! Because when I go to Poland I don't feel like that's my house anymore. In *that* house, where I grew up, where my granny stays now, I feel weird! I don't feel it's my place! I can't go to sleep. Because it's different surroundings and things.
>
> In Poland I live more in the countryside, whereas here obviously I live in a city. So, it was a big difference at the start as well because I wasn't used to this! [Scottish town] you would say, is a small place, but compared with how many cars there was there and how many cars there are here - then it's a big difference. And actually having shops near you, like, you had a shop, but you know in the countryside you have that one shop – that's it! Here you can actually get fuel, car shops and everything. I was like 'Oooh, amazin'! [excited tone]. [laughs at herself]
>
> Ana, interview 1, rural school

Ana provides a vivid description of how it feels to visit family in Poland, to the house she used to live in. 'I feel weird! I don't feel it's my place!'. This unsettles her, disrupts sleep and reinforces the sense that she no longer feels 'at home'. The experience is visceral for Ana, her national identity (feeling more Scottish than Polish) is bound up with her experiences at the local level. She describes a sense of place and the contrast between life in Scotland and Poland. Elsewhere in the interview Ana likens migration as *'moving from one world to another'.* This quote captures these contrasting worlds. She talks about the countryside in Poland and the urban environment in Scotland; the shops, the cars, the affluence. She describes her altered outlook on life and the impact this has had on her identity and the fact that Scotland now feels like home. Ana is positive about the move and a sense of place is central to this. This process of juggling local and national identity was not unique to Ana, however neither was it universal to all migrants in the research. Participants such as Lili and Amelia, felt more contested in their sense of belonging and were much less certain about feeling Scottish.

Ali, a student mentioned earlier with reference to the urban focus group had an unusually complex migration history. He seemed self-assured in his ethnic identity the first time we met, as he described his 'Asian' peer group in school. However, unlike his Scottish-born Bangladeshi and Pakistani friends, Ali was not born in the UK. Like Lucas, he appears to be proud of this flexible identity. The extracts below demonstrate Ali's lack of place-based identity as he comments, 'Birmingham, Holland or Edinburgh, so I don't know which background I'm from.' Interestingly,

this sense of flexibility in his identity does not seem an area of concern and in fact may be a source of pride.

Helen	If someone asks you now, 'what nationality are you?' what would you say
Ali	I'd say Dutch. It's not really Dutch though, as I've moved here, since on official documents it says I'm Dutch then I might as well go with that! [laughs]
Helen	If someone says, 'Where's home?'
Ali	I'd say my ethnic background is Bengali. That's where my parents come in.
Helen	Do you visit Bangladesh much?
Ali	We go to Bangladesh every now and then… possibly every two years, during the school holidays. And my mum's mum and my dad's family are in Bangladesh so we go visit them.
Helen	So you feel you have connections there?
Ali	Yeah.
Later in the interview	
Helen	So, we've talked a bit about identity. To clarify, you wouldn't say you are Scottish?
Ali	[laughs] That's a tough question I get. Living in Scotland for six or seven years now, it's equalled out with being Dutch but I don't see myself as being both. Dutch is fading away from me now, a little bit.
Final interview	
Helen	Tell me about what has shaped where you are today
Ali	We moved to Birmingham and ..I thought that was my personal space for the rest of [hesitates] I thought that was going to be my permanent address but then …there really wasn't very much restaurant catering jobs in Birmingham so we had to move here because of my dad and my location now has come to Edinburgh which has made me into a person that I don't know where I'm stated at, where I reside at, whether it's Birmingham, Holland or Edinburgh so I don't know which background I'm from.

Ali, interviews 2 and 3, urban school.

Ali begins by enacting his Dutch identity, 'I'd call myself Dutch' but quickly dismisses this. He places significance on official documentation and uses this as a legitimising sign of his nationality despite having no knowledge of Dutch and admitting the Dutch identity is 'fading away'. Without hesitation Ali describes his ethnic background, he identifies immediately with a Bengali heritage. This confidence and clarity is not matched when he is asked about feeling Scottish. He doesn't answer the question directly but clearly feels a connection to multiple spatial and cultural geographies. At one level, Ali appears to see his Identity as a commodity, a raw material or characteristic which was assigned to him at birth which appears disconnected to his everyday experience. He describes the official

documents which declare his Dutch citizenship and says ‘I might as well go with that’ even though he doesn’t feel Dutch. At the same time, he sees identity as enacted or lived as he describes his Dutch identity as ‘fading away’. For Ali, this makes planning for the future difficult and has a direct impact on transition. Later in the interview, he says ‘I’d love to live in Edinburgh for the rest of my life [pause] but with that [Asian] community. But obviously, that’s not likely to happen!’ (Ali, interview 2). Ali’s assessment is that Edinburgh is likely to be as diverse as the community he lived in in Birmingham. He is positive about his experiences in Scotland and is at pains to point out that he is treated equally and has not experienced racism. However, he also describe with fondness the intimacy of living in a large Asian community in Birmingham and contrasts this with living in Edinburgh, as part of a smaller minority. He is torn about the benefits and challenges of such a close-knit community, however like other participants Ali longs to draw together selected elements of his identity (resident of Edinburgh, being part of a large Asian community and Dutch passport holder). He demonstrates the tensions and dilemmas involved with migrant identities and yet casts this in an overwhelmingly positive light.

Findings in this section have shown that young migrants often juggle numerous affiliations to place; a national identity, a cultural heritage as well an immediate sense of where home is currently. Together the experiences of Ana and Ali illustrate the multiple ways migrant identity is connected to places at different scales in the transition to adulthood. So far this chapter has examined what differentiates transition for migrant young people. However, the example of Ali in particular demonstrates that shifting migrant identity can also be part of educational transition for young migrants. Their identities are adapted, reformed and re-evaluated over time. Ali demonstrates that this can often be performed with little anxiety and with the flexibility to manage several affiliations simultaneously. This theme of managing migrant identity during transition will be developed in the final section below.

6.4.3 Using educational transition as a bridge

As illustrated above, migrant identities, as with all identities, evolve, shift and are dependent on interactions with others. As discussed earlier (Section 6.2), this links with research conducted among Eastern Europeans in Northern Ireland, where McAreavey (2017) found migrant identity was critical to the everyday encounters of migrants. The study observed identities shifting constantly, depending on context and contingent on which identity is enacted (internally) or assigned (externally, by others) (McAreavey, 2017). These terms are helpful when considering the participants in this research. Which elements of identity are enacted and performed, which are assigned and how do young people respond to this as they discuss their future plans and aspirations? This is an important step in assessing how young people view their migrant status; in which circumstances do they see their identity as a form of cosmopolitan capital as discussed above, and when is it something 'assigned' to them, over which they have little control.

In this final example Piotr describes juggling multiple identities with an increasing awareness of an ability to resist some assigned identities and enact others. Piotr describes arriving in Scotland and being seated next to another Polish child. Together they were seen as those who were quiet, focused on their studies and good at maths. Over time Piotr has begun to mix more regularly with other students and started to perform his identity differently.

> Piotr I'm close friends with people who are Scottish, 'the lads' is what people call them. Then there's a Polish group that I'm friends with. I think we just kept close because we're Polish as well, we just have this common experience I guess and it's just easy. We don't even speak Polish, but it holds us together, it's like a bond! But I also have friends that are Scottish, they're close friends as well.
> Helen So you also have a foot in the 'lads group'?
> Piotr Yeah, a little bit [hesitates] now I'm not sure if I'm speaking out of my mind. You know [laughs]
> Helen So, can you be in two groups at once?
> Piotr I think you can. There is something distinct… I could imagine that in a big city there could be a big group of Polish, which could maybe create some tension? I don't know. Maybe they would be some discrimination, but I doubt it. Here I don't feel it whatsoever, but there is definitely a divide!
>
> Piotr, interview 1, rural school

Piotr describes a bond with his Polish friends, a group of five or six students (‘enough for a lunch table’ he says later). He explains that the group doesn’t speak Polish together, but share common experiences. Piotr speculates that in a different context, these different groups could lead to tension. He also refers to a group of White Scottish peers, called ‘the lads’. What is interesting about Piotr’s experience is that as he has moved through the senior school and makes this transition to adulthood his friendship group has also expanded, leading him to juggle multiple identities. The interview progresses with more questions about how we moves between these two distinct friendship groups.

Piotr	I took Advanced Higher Physics and there’s only four of us and we really get to talk and they [other class members] are part of the ‘The Lads’, the Scottish lads. So, we talk about stuff and I think they –you know people have preconceptions about people, from the one word they said to you, the attitude they give you – you have preconceptions. But when you have to stay with them in one class, the whole year you eventually get to know them!
Helen	Okay, so they’ve had their preconceptions challenged…
Piotr	Oh yeah! I’ve also changed their opinions about other Polish people. They were like ‘oh they’re Polish’, but they see us hang out together and know we’re a group of people. So more of my [Scottish] friends now talk to the others.
Helen	That’s really interesting, so you’re almost a go-between,
Piotr	A bridge! I don’t know how it happened, I think it’s just taking that subject. If I didn’t take Maths and Physics, I think I would have just been stuck with the five or four Polish people. ‘Stuck’ –they are my friends!

Piotr, interview 1, rural school

Piotr’s reflections reveal a lot about how he is experiencing transition. His identity is pure performance. His final remark about being ‘stuck’ with the Polish group is telling, on the one hand he is keen to connect with others from his ethnic group, but equally it is easy to notice his delight at being accepted as one of ‘the lads’. He narrates his own journey and views his position as a ‘bridge’ between different groups; for Piotr the process of juggling his multiple identities, a Pole, a male, a Physics student, are all central to navigating the complex relations in the final year of school.

As discussed earlier with reference to Sasha (Section 6.2.2), migrant identity can be disrupted because someone can be seen as ‘hero at home’ and ‘loser at destination’ (McAreavey, 2017). Listening to accounts of integration in the

playground, classroom and dining hall, this dissonance seems especially powerful for young people who appear acutely aware of these conflicting ascriptions of identity. This requires migrants to reconfigure their understanding of the world as they internalise these different ascriptions of identity. In Piotr's case, he seems to be keen to present himself as successful at home and at the destination, perhaps inflating success and concealing challenges in both places. He describes missing family in Poland and the desire to fly home for weddings and christenings, he says at one point 'I could have been a godfather too, but I wasn't in Poland'. The disappointment of missing social events either in Scotland or Poland occupies his thinking. He explains his summer plans which involve flying immediately to Poland. 'then I'm coming back for prom and then I'm also going to my brothers' wedding' (interview 2). He is working hard to maintain his position in both places, as popular school leaver and as faithful brother/uncle/grandson. He describes his plans to take a Scottish friend (one of 'the lads') back to Poland in the summer. 'He said 'I'll pay for my ticket' because at first I thought it was a joke! Then I was like 'okay then' (Piotr, interview 2). He explains that he looks forward to watching his worlds collide: 'that's gonna be an interesting interaction between me and my brothers!' (Piotr, interview 2). Another point to make in this exchange and Piotr's ongoing identity juggle of his ability to draw on additional resources. There is a strong connection between migrant identity and socio-economic status and this important theme will be the focus on analysis in the next chapter. Piotr is able to return to Poland at least twice a year and appears to occupy a high socio-economic status that other participants in the study. He connects his social and cultural capital with his migrant status and able to lever those resources to resist categorisations and embrace others. This example provides further evidence of the distinctiveness of migrant educational transitions which have been the focus of this chapter.

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter the focus has shifted from the outcomes of school leavers (Chapter 4) to their experiences of transition. In particular, it has examined how migrant background shapes this period of decision making which takes place at the end of compulsory education. It has been argued that transition to adulthood is a critical

period within the life course and worthy of detailed exploration, particularly in light of the divergence in the nature of school to work transitions and the debates around inequalities and social justice. It was noted that there is a shortage of detailed studies on the educational transitions of new migrants, with particular development required using innovative longitudinal methods. Having established the needs and identified the focus, this chapter set out how young people assert, construct and resist their migrant identity in the transition to adulthood.

The research findings coalesced around three major themes. First, the theme of family. Here, it is argued that young school leavers often show a distinctive commitment to and responsibility for their families. Supported by the literature this finding highlights examples of young people expecting to care for their parents in a variety of ways, both now and in the longer term. The study also found that some young people are acutely aware of the sacrifice of their parents in moving and this sense of indebtedness drives a stronger sense of commitment to their studies and to achieving their goals in the future. The second theme discussed in this chapter focussed on the specific ability of young people to learn resilience and flexibility through their migration experience. The idea of acknowledging the 'process of migration' was drawn from the literature and used to illustrate the multiple ways school leavers harness their migrant experiences in transition. These included demonstrating a capacity to develop contingency plans, cope with disappointment and develop confidence through language learning. This led to a realisation that some young migrants may use their migrant identity in specific ways to gain what is termed 'cosmopolitan capital', trading on their migrant identity in specific situations to assert distinction or gain some advantage. The chapter concludes by assessing the third theme from the interviews which centred on shifting migrant identities. This builds on the idea of 'cosmopolitan capital' but also explores what is involved in resisting and constructing a migrant identity. This section found that, for young people with a migrant background, the transition to adulthood presents additional challenges as they experience a change in their physical location. This change of place can disrupt their sense of self. It was also found that young people may need to juggle identities and make adjustments in different settings.

This chapter makes a significant contribution to understanding of the lived experiences of transition. It sheds light on the practices and processes of young migrants as they make decisions and adopt multiple identities. Identities which shift constantly, particularly as school leavers move on to university. The findings in this chapter, as highlighted in the literature, suggest that migrants can feel they are caught between identities, an in-between state (Tyrrell et al., 2018). Some recent research on experiences of migration has used the language on liminality, occupying a position on the edge (Owen, 2018; Perez Murcia, 2018). As has been reiterated throughout the chapter, for some participants (at some time points) this "in-betweenness" felt overwhelming and isolating. However, for others this was a period of growing confidence and increasing independence which is coupled with an excitement about the future. The methodological approach used in this study has provided an opportunity to observe that individuals can oscillate between these experiences over this dynamic period of transition. The concept of liminality, that of 'occupying a position on both sides of, a boundary or threshold' (Owen, 2018) could be a useful metaphor when reflecting on the experiences of young people who are undergoing several transitions –over time (through education transition) and across space (through international migration). Liminality in this context, does not assuming a negative or positive experience, but one which is constantly changing, sometimes in unexpected ways, full of opportunity but inherently uncertain. Future research into these liminal spaces could build on the findings from this chapter. Further work could compliment the first section which focused on the shaping role of family, exploring the liminal spaces of migrant parents as they provide support and advice during educational transition. The discussion chapter will also revisit the avenues of future research which emerge from this study. This chapter has explored the role of migration background on transition, it has focused solely on one axis of difference and does not examine what other factors are at play aside from migration. The next chapter will reflect on the mediating role of gender, class and family background and discuss the importance of these intersections.

Chapter 7 Intersections: Which differences make a difference?

7.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters have focused on the ethnic differences in the destination of school leavers in Scotland including contested ideas of success, as well as the ways migrant background shapes experiences of transition. This final empirical chapter addresses the third research question which examines how poverty, ethnicity and geography intersect to create distinct pathways for young people from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds. Drawing on the quantitative data and analysing it alongside the qualitative material, this chapter finds strong evidence that these axes of difference intersect to shape educational outcomes. However, the significance of these layers of difference is often underestimated, and their consequences downplayed by young people. It is argued that there is a fundamental disconnect between discourses of equality which were articulated by young people and their everyday experiences of difference and inequality. This chapter sets out to expose this disconnect and explore its characteristics, causes and consequences. It finds that when discussion of difference is muted and debates about the importance of difference are restricted, an environment is created that potentially inhibits the identification, reporting and tackling of discrimination. This occurs despite young people's strong identification with and articulation of institutional narratives of equality. This paradox is illustrated through these data which highlight the ways in which ethnicity, class and gender interact, shaping outcomes and experiences of educational transition. This chapter proposes two main arguments, first that multiple axes of difference intersect and can compound disadvantage and secondly that there is a disconnect between narratives of equality and the lived experiences of it.

The chapter begins by briefly revisiting the literature on neoliberal thinking and identifies how these are ideas are embedded in the language and culture of Scottish schools. Next, the chapter presents the evidence, first through the narratives of the young people themselves and then using rigorous statistical analyses of unique longitudinal administrative data. The evidence is presented through a series of case studies which look at the role of difference, neighbourhood disadvantage, family and social class. In the final section, the importance of the intersections of these differences comes to the fore. Multiple identities are shown to be significant and can indeed compound disadvantage. In conclusion this chapter raises questions about paradoxical neoliberal positionings. It shows that that there is a gap between the rhetoric and the reality of the narratives of equality and that multiple levels of difference can create and sustain disadvantage.

7.1.1 Paradoxical neoliberal positionings

As discussed earlier in the thesis, neoliberalism remains both a divisive and pervasive idea. The economic philosophy that adopts a form of liberalism which favours free market capitalism, has become a dominant political and popular narrative (Reay, 2012; Reay, 2017). Proponents see neoliberal ideals as 'the most efficient and humane way to allocate resources and to let people determine their priorities' (Madsen, 2016; 20). It is argued that the system rewards merit and believes that individuals are best equipped to make their own decisions. However, critics suggest that whilst resources remain unequally distributed, this system will benefit some whilst disenfranchising others (Gane, 2014; Jones, 2015; Monbiot, 2016). Recent scholarship on social inequalities in the UK has focused on the destabilising role of neoliberalism in education, see section 3.1.2. (Devine & Li, 2013; Dorling, 2015, 2018; Dorling et al., 2007; Reay, 2012). The influence of neoliberalism is said to have led to an increasing emphasis on competition, quantification and highly individualised explanations of unequal outcomes. These themes came to the fore with reference to the contested ideas of educational success among school leavers (Chapter 5). The increasing influence of neoliberal ideals has also been accompanied by a growing rhetoric around the need to address educational inequalities, which have been the focus of attention by

politicians from across the political spectrum. However, scholars warn that educational equality has become a dominant vision to ensure that the 'economic ends of education are transcendent and competitive individualism is seen as a virtue' (Reay, 2012; 591) It is argued that access to education is 'diminishing for those who already have barriers to learning, whilst 16-19-year olds are being funnelled through a curriculum with employability as its dominant objective (Brown, 2016). These are contested ideas which demand scrutiny and further examination, they are also highly relevant to this study on experiences and outcomes of school leavers. This chapter does not set out to evaluate the curriculum or address these interesting policy questions, but these debates provide a critical context for the findings which follow. Reference to neoliberal ideas has only emerged as a result of careful analysis of the data and the observation that young people appear to focus on highly individualised understandings of unequal outcomes.

Two aspects of neoliberalism become crucial in this chapter. First the emphasis on individual narratives; the suggestion that if you try hard enough you will achieve. Secondly, the suggestion that neoliberalism devolves responsibility for inequality away from structures, institutions and society and towards the individual suffering the injustice. Recent academic scholarship has identified competitive individualism as a key tenet of neoliberal education systems (Dorling, 2018). The free market approach encourages the privatisation and marketization of primary, secondary and particularly tertiary education (Bottero, 2009; Gane, 2014). The language of choice and personal effort is said to give power to individuals, whilst simultaneously devolving responsibility from structures and society (Goldberg, 2009; Reay, 2012). These philosophical underpinning in education systems around the world, appear progressive and thus hard to critique (Ball, 2017). Reay describes how such attitudes are also pervasive in society with people feeling that if people try hard enough, they can make it if they really want to. This discourse of individualised effort and responsibility can serve to obscure the structural causes of injustice and inequality. Reay has argued that a socially just education system, where there is equality of outcome, is not possible in an unjust society (Reay, 2012; 588). The narratives around why some young people 'succeed' and others do not, will be the focus of discussion in this chapter. For an overview of conceptual approaches to equality in the education system, see section 3.1 in the Literature Review.

7.1.2 Methodological approach

The methodological approach used in this study was critical for revealing the subtle and pervasive ways that difference along multiple lines was simultaneously denied yet enacted. The research phase was designed with specific attention to intersections of difference. For example, the multiple forms of data collection and the development of relationships with participants have both been critical to generating the insights in this chapter, uncovering axes of difference that would not otherwise have been evident. Cognisant of the sensitivity of discussing topics such as race, faith, gender and economic background, these themes were incorporated in broader questions and rarely raised directly by the interviewer. Nevertheless, 'difference' emerged as a common point of reference for many of the young people in the study who seemed surprisingly comfortable with discussing their own identities and those of others. Despite this, exploring multiple axes of difference and how these can influence educational transition is a challenging research objective. Both quantitatively and qualitatively there are opportunities and yet difficulties in gaining sufficient understanding of these complex intersections.

The quantitative dataset used for this study is large (n=250,444). However, the process of interpreting interactions is not simple once several variables are added as group samples (cell sizes) become too small to ensure statistical significance (for example, Polish, females, aged 18, from the least deprived deciles). As for the qualitative fieldwork, the methodology has created rich longitudinal data which has a structured sample (n=35). The relatively small sample limits the number of people who can be seen to have multiple axes of difference. To overcome some of these challenges, the notion of multiple forms of difference was approached more generically within the focus group and followed up in the final interview.

One technique which was used to highlight the complexity of multiple axes of differences was the Decision Alley exercise which took place within the focus group in each school. The participants split randomly into two groups for a debate. For more details on the exercise see the Methods chapter (Section 4.4). The activity resonated with students, arousing passionate debate which in turn produced more nuanced explanations of unequal outcomes and the difference which difference

makes. In both schools the activity had an energizing impact on the group and fostered an atmosphere where ideas were contested and evaluated. The exercise was filmed and analysis of these visual data revealed that the most vocal contributors had often been quiet in other activities. The freedom to debate, at times arguing against their own personal views, allowed new perspectives to be introduced. The added value came in the discussion after these exercises, where the conversation was deepened, and participants were more engaged with the complexity of the issue of difference. The section which follows focuses on one exchange during the decision alley exercise which highlighted the participants' contested ideas about whether all young people have the same opportunity to succeed.

7.2 Intersections of difference

7.2.1 The role of difference - an equal chance of success?

During the 'Decision Alley' exercise in the rural school, one of the statements read out was *'All young people in Scotland have an equal chance of success in school'*. Two groups were formed, with a decision maker in the middle, and the debate began. The short extract below demonstrates the underlying influence of a narrative which suggests that if you work hard enough you can succeed. Participants on the 'for' side of the debate had to argue 'yes, all young people in Scotland have an equal chance of success'. Facing them was a group which had to oppose this argument, suggesting instead that young people in Scotland do not all have an equal chance of success.

Ana	**For**	We have free education here. It's not like that in all places, you have to pay for primary, secondary, university. Here, everyone has an equal chance of success.
Freya	**Against**	But there are private school, where you get so much teaching time and opportunities to do stuff, just opportunities in general.
Hope	**Against**	But, even in public [state] schools if you're from a slightly better off area, even if you're going to the regular public school it's still going to better than if you're in a poorer area. That does make a difference.
Freya	**Against**	Like, I couldn't go to my ballet and things.
Hope	**Against**	Yeah, and that's just someone from a regular family.
Ana	**For**	Yeah but if you work hard enough and know what you want to achieve. If you really want something you will achieve it no matter what difficulties you go through.

Ana, Freya and Hope taking part in rural school focus group

Ana makes a number of statements to suggest that there is an equality of opportunity in Scotland. She suggests the provision of free education and sufficient effort by an individual will ensure that success is possible, showing the ease with which she can relay neoliberal arguments about educational equality. These narratives were not new, they had emerged through the interviews and are illustrative of a discourse which focuses on individual effort. The debate introduced greater nuance to this perspective however, with Freya and Hope both demonstrating an understanding of a more complex formula for success. Hope insists that there are differences between schools which may also influence performance, whilst Freya discusses the importance of family background and access to extracurricular activities.

Analysis of the video recording shows that one participant (Susie) begins to get increasingly frustrated as she argues *for* the motion, ('everyone does have an equal chance of success'). At first she joins in the debate, then she falls quiet listening intently to the discussion. Her body language changes, at first she folds her arms and then places her hands over her mouth as though she is holding in her own views. The debate continues chaotically around her and she begins to move around, agitated. Finally, she interjects.

Susie	**For**	I am sorry I have to play the dyslexic card [everyone laughs]. It's true though [gets more serious]. I have dyslexia [long pause] Even though it's been hard I've still managed to achieve what I could achieve. [pause] I have just had to work around it. Even though my sister is dyslexic she has got a First-Class degree in molecular genetics. So, you can still achieve if you work hard. Even though it's hard, you can do it.
		[general chat/encouragement for Susie from the entire group]
Hope	**Against**	It is true - but some people will be able to get there much faster. Just because we all have access to free education doesn't mean it is equal. All schools are not the same.

Susie and Hope taking part in rural school focus group

Finally, Susie breaks ranks and steps out of the activity to discuss a topic which she is clearly passionate about. The groups stand quietly to listen as she delivers a passionate argument (unlike anything elicited through interviews with Susie). She describes her own experience of dyslexia and the way she has had to 'work around it'. Susie is keen to communicate the message that young people may have the same 'chance of success', but it may be much harder for some than for others. This ties into debates on the difference between equality of opportunity and equality of outcome, which were discussed in Section 2.1. The crux of the debate for the participants seems to be whether individual effort is enough to surpass pre-existing inequalities. Or, in policy terms, whether enabling equality of opportunity will eventually lead to equality of outcome. Susie acknowledges that there are opportunities for everyone, but that other background factors (such as having dyslexia) are also important.

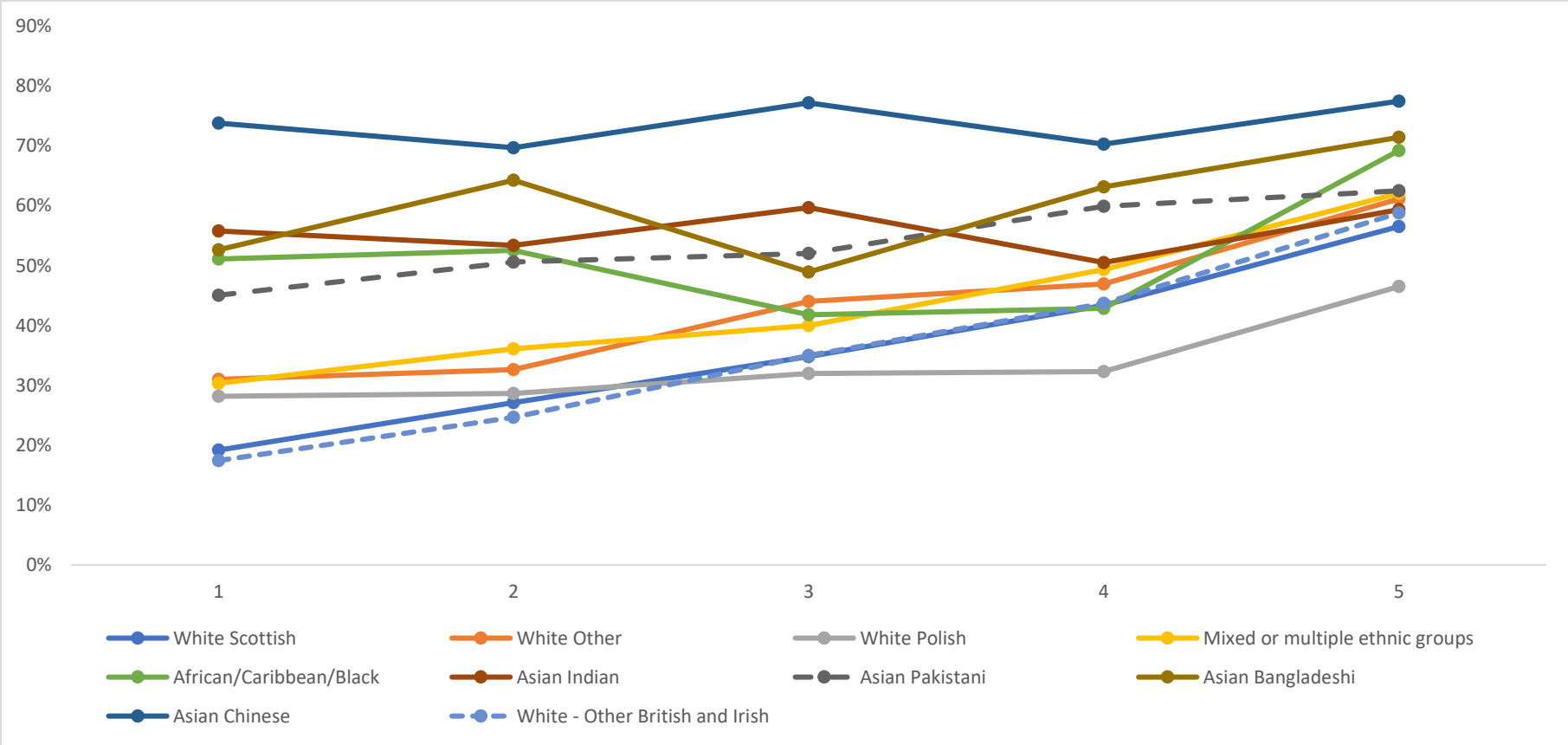
The group response to this exchange is interesting. Hope dares to re-enter the debate and reiterate her position that not all schools are the same. Overall, however this debate sheds light on the prevalence of the self-actualising narrative which scholars have argued is key tenet of neoliberal education systems, a form of competitive individualism which was simultaneously contested and resisted in the findings discussed in Chapter 5. In this activity, the group acknowledged that parental background and the type of school could play a role in success, but overall the group appeared to prioritise personal effort and individual achievement. This argument was particularly salient for Ana, who repeats this point several times in this exercise and reiterates these discourses in her interviews. As a Polish migrant, Ana appears particularly attracted and engaged with the idea that if you try hard

enough you will achieve. This is perhaps unsurprisingly given that she is caught up in a major life event (migration to Scotland) which is predicated on the premise that individual effort will make a difference. The effect of this self-actualising narrative is especially attractive to Ana (born in Poland) and Lili (born in Hungary), who were both vocal in this debate. Of course, the challenge of this narrative is highlighted in the evidence already presented in this thesis which has demonstrated that success is influenced by multiple factors including area deprivation. Attention now turns to the quantitative data and examines how ethnicity and area deprivation may intersect.

7.2.2 The role of neighbourhood disadvantage - intersections with ethnicity

Chapter three (Literature Review) demonstrated ethnic differences in post-school destinations including progression to Higher Education. Figure 7-1 shows that the probability of success, in the sense of progressing to Higher Education is not simple a function of your ethnic background, but will also differ according to area deprivation. It is striking that, although in the same direction, the gradient of the lines differ between ethnic groups. Neighbourhood deprivation appears to matter significantly for White groups, to smaller extent for Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Polish, and very little for Indian and Chinese. The spatial distribution of ethnic groups is unequal across Scotland (Kelly, 2016). For example, White Scottish live in all area types, but the 2011 Census data reveal that African and Black groups are clustered in rented housing within less affluent communities, whilst Indian groups are often clustered in less deprived areas. This is significant because the chances of going to university are much higher for school leavers living in the most affluent communities, regardless of ethnic background. Yet, fascinatingly Figure 7-1 also provides an insight into the gradient which exists within (and not just between ethnic groups).

Figure 7-1 Predicted probability of going on to Higher Education by ethnicity and neighbourhood deprivation (2012-2016) (where 1 is the most deprived quintile of neighbourhoods and 5 is the least deprived)



Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish Schools Leavers Survey and the Scottish School Census 2012-2016
Note: Neighbourhood is defined as a datazone using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016

These findings connect with the participants of the debate described above. For Ana who is Polish and lives in social housing in a less affluent neighbourhood, her likely disadvantage appears to be compounded. These results shows that whilst nearly half of Polish young people living in affluent areas go straight on to university (47 per cent). This figure is much lower for Polish school leavers in the least deprived neighbourhoods (28 per cent). In contrast, Susie's (White Scottish) family background means she has a much greater probability of leaving school and going to university (perhaps as much as a 57 per cent chance). Although this does not detract from the individual effort required for Susie, it is more likely she will reach her goal of going to university. Ana and Susie have both faced obstacles and both subscribe to the dominant narrative that says if you work hard you will achieve. In reality, as Figure 7-1 highlights, Ana's probability of success measured crudely by access to Higher Education is much smaller than Susie's. There is not equality of outcome, because some characteristics can mitigate disadvantage whilst others reinforce it.

7.2.3 The role of family – intersections of social class and ethnicity

So far it has been argued that pervasive neoliberal ideas of individualised effort and success can detract from the structural causes of educational inequality in young people's narratives about their opportunities and educational experiences. The exchange in the rural focus group demonstrated that some participants were aware of the more nuanced argument, that hard work does not always result in educational success. However, the additional dis/advantage of migrant background or social class was less salient in young people's narratives. Admittedly the cumulative effect of ethnic background and social class were not easy themes to tease out through the fieldwork. However, these intersections were explored during the second interview when all participants were asked to reflect on whether their experiences of transition might have been different had they been born into a difference context, with two differences selected from gender, class, ethnic or geographic location. A common response was the importance of the 'type of family someone is from'. Thus migrant background and class were effectively

discussed through ideas of family capital: Although class or socio-economic status was rarely mentioned explicitly, especially with reference to themselves, participants often suggested family background, incorporating ideas of class, was significant in shaping their experiences.

Faye, a White Scottish student in the urban school lives in an affluent area of the city, her parents are both architects and she is particularly aware of the role her parents have played in supporting her through transition. During eighteen months of fieldwork she regularly refers to the extra-curricular activities she is involved in and the influence of her family. In the second interview she is asked whether she thinks her plans for the future would be different if she had a different migrant background. She is asked what difference it would be make if she was Polish.

> I mean I think it would depend on the way the parents bring up the child. A lot of the ways I look at things is the way that my mum has brought me up and the way my mum has taught me things and made me look at life in a different way. She's always tried to keep a positive attitude about things and always trying to keep an open mind and don't just have that fixed mind set, if things go bad that's okay – if you're trying. So I think it would depend on how those Polish parents would bring you up. So you could come from even a bad background, but I think it would be a lot harder that way, because if you're parents aren't supportive and aren't encouraging and stuff I don't think you'd have that same idea of what success is.
>
> Faye, interview 2, urban school

Faye appears not to focus on affluence but on the supportive role which parents can have on outcomes and aspirations. Like Ana and Susie, she homes in on 'attitude', even stressing the importance of not having a 'fixed mindset'. Giving a glimpse of the impact of the training which pupils had received on developing a 'growth mindset', based on the work of influential Carol Dweck (Dweck, 2008). Faye is clearly familiar with the psychology of success taught in school – the idea that your mental attitude and individual effort is paramount. However, she balances this will an awareness that individuals are also shaped by family background. She is asked to expand on what she means by a 'bad background':

> I mean if –even parents that just let their kids do whatever they want. Their kids could go out and do drugs and they just wouldn't care. Or the parents who have abused their children or the ones who are really bad alcoholics and just don't care. Obviously, you can have alcoholic parents and they still care about you but yeah, just those that don't really care about what their kids do. They let their kids just drop out of school and do nothing. Those kinds of one.
>
> Faye, interview 2, urban school

Faye doesn't use the language of poverty or social class; however, it could be argued that these themes lie close to the surface in these remarks. Her own positionality as a middle-class student and the trope of parents who 'don't really care what their kids do' seem to point to her understanding that her own educational achievements have been strongly influenced by the social class of her parents. This is an argument that is well supported and discussed in the literature (Chapter 3). Faye was typical of many participants in the study (largely from more affluent backgrounds) who believed that family (inherently their social class) is more likely to have influenced plans for the future than her ethnic or migrant background. This is also illustrated by Kieran, who was discussed the previous chapter with reference to his response to this question. He is also from a more affluent family and is places a strong emphasis on the role of family background.

> I feel like it's all to do with –like when you're a child, that's really important. Children are so important I think because that's when you start to think 'what is that person doing?' It's when you look at adults and you're a child you're just like 'Wow! Look, they're doing that, they're doing that.' But I don't know. If I was in a different family, I don't think it would be the same.
>
> Kieran, interview 2, rural school

Kieran appears to emphasise the importance of people to look up to. He states the importance of childhood and being in a supportive environment. Like Faye, he doesn't articulate this in terms of social class, however throughout the interviews he has discussed the impact of living abroad, having a broad range of friends and being brought up by his parents. Without explicitly acknowledging it, Kieran illustrates his status as middle-class. As Savage (2015) points out, this advantages him through the possession of social and cultural capital rather than simply material wealth.

Together, these examples highlight the influence of family socio-economic background on educational outcomes and aspirations. Kieran and Faye both articulate the importance of family, without fully appreciating the intersecting influence of social class and ethnic background on educational outcomes, which Figure 7-1 reveals so vividly. Although these two voices are from more privileged backgrounds, the sentiments were also demonstrated by young people in less advantaged situations. For example, Lili's narrative will be discussion in the next section and highlights the importance of family background. The figure also shows that while there are differences between ethnic groups, there are also variation within groups, based on socio-economic status. This is a theme which also emerged through the qualitative fieldwork and will be illustrated in the next section, through the narrative of two participants both with a migrant background, yet with different cultural and social resources.

7.2.4 The role of migrant capital – intersections of ethnicity and class

The Decision Alley exercise within the focus group was followed a few months later by the final interview. The interview was an opportunity to revisit some of the themes raised (and, by then, analysed) from the focus group. A sorting exercise was designed to allow discussion on potential factors which may have influenced participants in the past as well as discuss what may influence their choices in the future. This would further test the strength of the self-actualising narrative, but extend it by seeing whether students would be familiar with the intersection, and multiple forms of difference which may shape their outcomes.

Figure 7-2 Factors influencing the present and future (Activity within interview 3)

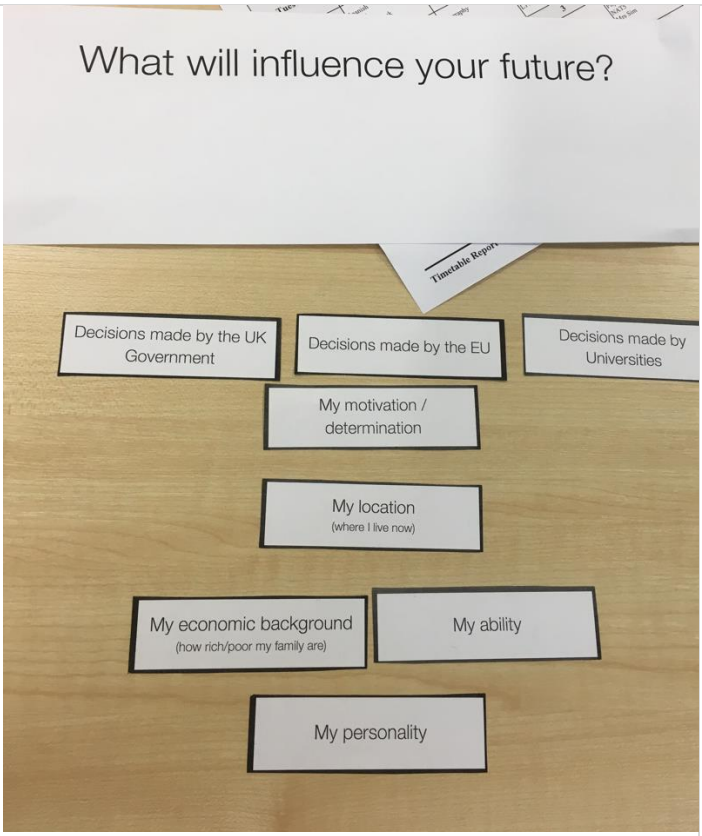


Image 1 Lili

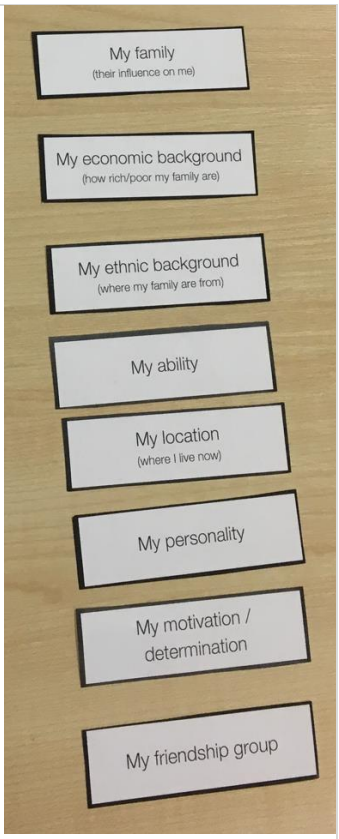


Image 2 Lucas

Source: Materials from third interviews with Lili and Lucas, activity devised by author.

Participants were told they could use as many or as few cards as they liked (see Appendix J for full list) and placing them beside each other represented an equal importance. The discussions which were elicited whilst the exercise was carried out helped tease out how young people perceive the complex factors which may influence their future. Figure 7-2 (Image 1) shows the results of Lili's sorting exercise. Lili's narrative contrasts with that of many of her peers. Through the course of this discussion she explains that she expects external factors to shape her immediate future more than her own motivation and determination. This is a direct contradiction of what was highlighted through the workshop and spotlights a number of issues. For Lili, who was born in Lithuania, this period of transition is particularly fluid and uncertain. Her mum had recently lost her job, the family were considering moving again (within Scotland) and Lili had received exam results which were not as good as she had anticipated. These factors appear to combine

and contribute to a diminishing faith in the self-actualising narrative; instead she asserts that external factors may well influence and determine her immediate future. She discusses the effects of Brexit and negotiations with the EU and how she is now less certain about if and where she will attend university.

Lili's response in this exercise challenges the dominant ideas about how and why success is achieved as well as undermines dominant ideas about competitive individualism. In contrast, Lucas' response to this exercise epitomises a much more common approach which places his family and background at the top of the list followed by other factors such as ability, location and friendship groups. This reflects his narrative throughout the interviews. Unlike Lili, Lucas's parents both have paid work and have remained settled since arriving in Scotland. He describes a transnational existence, returning to Poland 'several times a year' and fulfilling important roles in both places ('prefect', 'role model' in Scotland and 'Uncle' and 'Brother' in Poland). Lucas projects a confident air where he feels he has agency to ensure he is successful and meet his aspirations. Unlike Lili, he has a clear plan for attending university and has achieved this goal by the time of the final interview. This connects closely with the arguments in the previous chapter about migrant capital and the heterogenous experiences of the migrant experience. The contrast between Lili and Lucas raises the possibility that differing levels of cultural and economic capital make a greater difference than their migrant backgrounds. In fact, the possession of such capital can mitigate other axes of difference and counteract the effects of some forms of disadvantage.

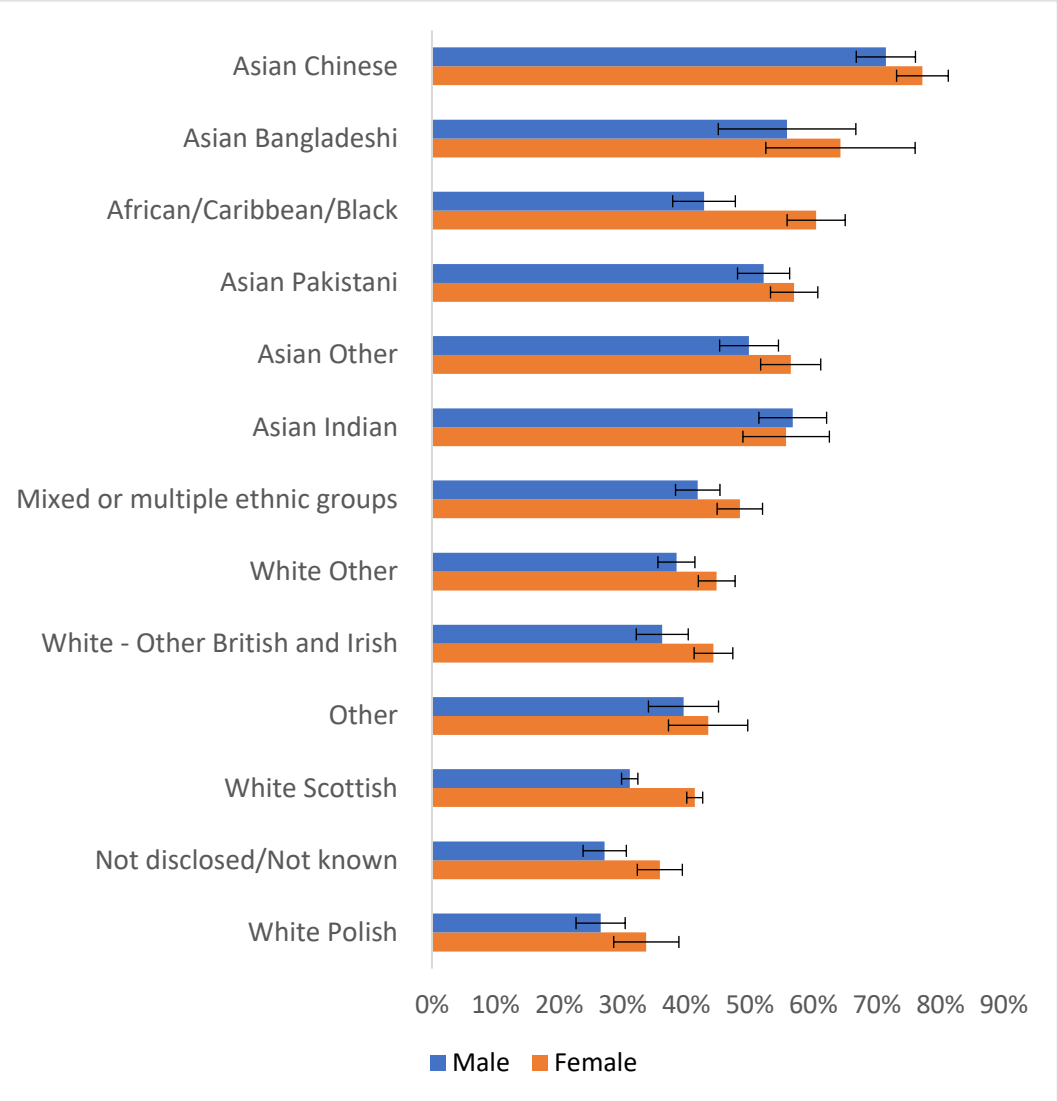
7.2.5 The role of gender – intersections with ethnicity and geography

The role of gender on aspirations and outcomes emerged as a common theme throughout the interviews. Young people raised the topic themselves in reference to peer groups, experiences of transition and their plans for the future. It was also an axis of difference which was explored using the quantitative data. Both of these elements are discussed below.

The evidence presented in Figure 7-3 sheds light on the intersections between gender and ethnicity in the likelihood of going on to Higher Education for school leavers in Scotland. The figure illustrates that female school leavers are more likely than their male peer to progress to Higher Education in every ethnic group apart from Indian. Marginally more Indian males (57 per cent) go on to university than Asian Indian females (56 per cent), however the confidence intervals indicate a lack of statistical significance. Overall, the difference between male and female school leavers is most stark within the African/Caribbean/Black group, where over 60 per cent of females attend university compared with 43 per cent of males. This significant gender gap was hidden in the aggregate figure for African/Caribbean/Black school leavers (see Chapter 5) and raises questions about why these differences exist. The underperformance of Black African and Caribbean boys has been the focus of extensive research in England (Plewis, 2011; Strand, 2014). However, in Scotland this group is much smaller in size (around 0.01 per cent of the school age population, n=8,348 pupils in 2016/17) and has not been the focus of any empirical studies. Given the lack of existing research in Scotland, the differences in the size, composition and nature of this group, it is hard to make direct comparisons or speculate on the causes of these differences. However, these intersections would be a valuable avenue for future research, particularly using qualitative methodologies. This is something which was not possible in this study, as the sample does not feature any students from this background.

Another, group with stark difference between the destinations of male and female school leavers is the White Scottish cohort, with around 10 per cent more females than males progressing to Higher Education after school. These figures reflect the national trends which have been discussed earlier (chapter 3), however the gender breakdown provides valuable context for the qualitative fieldwork which set out to discusses themes of gender and ethnicity.

Figure 7-3 Predicted probability of going on to Higher Education by ethnicity and gender (2012-2016)



Source: Author's own analysis of the Scottish Schools Leavers Survey and the Scottish School Census 2012-2016

Gender equality was a salient theme for young people in this study. Throughout the eighteen months of fieldwork, there were high profile debates in the media focused on the gender pay gap, women's suffrage and the 'me too movement'. At the same time, the culture and ethos within both schools seemed to place an emphasis on an equalities agenda promoting a message which embraces differences and yet encourages individuals to work hard to reach their own potential, regardless of background. Despite these overt messages and more subtle influences, the interviews highlighted some surprising perspectives on gender. The discourse that girls try harder, are more focused on their studies and

mostly outperform boys was well rehearsed by male and female participants in both schools from most backgrounds.

Akash, born in Scotland to Bangladeshi parents was asked whether his plans for the future would be different if he had been born a girl.

> I think it would be [different]. I think girls tend to be more focused on education than males. I know males are sometimes bias and say that males are better than females. But I think females are stronger because they have to go through more pain … then they go through feminism as well, seeing as they don't get paid enough like men. So, I think it would make me more focused and kind of change my outlook. I would be more sensitive as well if I was girl. So, I think it would be a lot different.
>
> Akash, interview 2, urban school

For Akash, he suggests that his outlook might be different if he was a female, he might be more focussed and more sensitive. He projects himself as supportive and empathetic 'I think females are stronger' and clearly has an awareness of the gender pay gap. However, Akash also says, 'girls tend to be more focussed on education' and appears to suggest that he might be more likely to succeed if he was a female. However, this perspective was not limited to male participants. When Faye is asked the same question, her response was remarkably similar.

> Probably different. I think I'd have been a lot more distracted in school. My group of friends are really focused on work and from experience in this school not many of the guys are, so I just think I would have been more distracted and less focused on what I wanted to do.
>
> Faye, interview 2, urban school

For Faye, who attends the same school, she places the focus on peer groups and the culture of performance within the school. This has been discussed in the literature, with some scholars suggesting that school policy and practice can have a significant impact on attitudes to gender, with potential to address the gender-attainment gap (Corry, 2017). In this study, the perspectives on gender across all ethnic backgrounds were similar. Some students (from all backgrounds) said that they were not convinced gender does make a big difference. However, they concurrently quickly reinforced the trope of 'hard working girls' and 'less focused boys'. For example, Craig (White Scottish) responds to the same question about

whether his plans for the future would be different if he was a girl. He hesitates and then responds,

> I think I'm going to say no. I feel maybe 50 years ago it would have been different, but I think now everyone kind of has the same goal and they all want to do well, they won't leave it for someone else to do well for them. They would want it all themselves. I think girls are more hardworking than boys are. …My sister studied so much. I don't want to put her down but she wasn't as naturally bright. She studies and she tries hard and that's the difference between me and her. She has actually worked for it. Whereas I don't really work for it.
>
> Craig, interview 2, rural school

Unlike Faye and Akash, Craig suggests that his plans might not be considerably different if he was a girl. He is keen to point to the progress made over time (something mentioned by a number of participants), but then Craig quickly goes on to say 'girls are more hardworking than boys'. He describes his sister's work ethic, suggesting that her success will be grounded in hard work not her natural ability. Craig engages uncritically with the argument that there is equality of opportunity but not equality of outcome. He suggests that the main reason for success/failure will be individual effort. His statement, 'they won't leave it for someone else to do well for them' is consistent with the kind of individualised narratives of success discussed in an earlier chapter (see 4.3.3). Although these perspectives on gender were pervasive between both genders and across all ethnic groups in this study, it is acknowledged that the sample was small. Limits on time and the number of participants means the intersections between gender and ethnicity were not explored in greater depth and questions about how gender is differently seen to shape educational experiences across and within ethnic and migrant groups would provide multiple opportunities for further research.

This section set out to examine the mediating role of a number of aspects of identity in forging young people's understandings and experiences of educational transition: gender, neighbourhood poverty, class (family background) and migrant capital and ethnicity. Strong evidence has been presented that these axes of difference intersect to shape educational transition. The section highlights that these layers of difference are often underestimated by young people, and their consequences downplayed. Using the narratives of the young people themselves together with rigorous statistical analyses of unique longitudinal administrative data, it possible to see that intersection of difference are important for

understanding experiences and drivers of inequalities. Young people are keen to emphasise the importance of the equality of opportunity yet seem unaware of structural causes of the equality of outcomes; at least, structural narratives do not feature prominently in young people's reflections. The next section goes on to look at the fundamental disconnect between the dominant equalities narrative articulated by young people their everyday experiences of difference.

7.3 The difficultly of discussing difference

Another aspect of neoliberalism which will be explored in this final section is the suggestion that neoliberalism has worked to 'sanction and exacerbate inequalities' (Reay, 2012; 592). In any length of time spent in a school currently, messages of inclusion and equality are immediately evident. Slogans, posters, display boards and curriculum content reinforce the suggestion that difference is welcomed, desirable in fact. Diversity is undoubtedly acknowledged but as this chapter reveals the rhetoric was often not supported by every day experiences of enactment of this inclusive discourse. This coincides with the political narrative which has at times identified certain types of difference as bad or undesirable. There is a narrative that shared characteristics – shared British values for example, should override any individual difference in the public realm (Harries, 2012). As discussed in section 3.1.2 of the Literature Review, neoliberal positionings of equality and diversity suggest that equality is desirable and possible. They suggest that regardless of race, gender and class, everyone can succeed with sufficient effort. These perspectives were not the starting point for this work but emerged through careful analysis of the data which was gathered. They provide a valuable framework with which to understand the contradictory narratives of equality and emphasis on individual effort which dominate these findings.

7.3.1 Embracing difference

The disconnect between narratives of equality and the lived experience of it was apparent through interviews with participants from all backgrounds. At times, inconsistencies were apparent within one encounter, in other examples these emerged following the analysis of several interviews. In all cases, it was possible to notice the subtle and pervasive ways difference was simultaneously denied and yet enacted. This was vividly illustrated in the first interview with Penny, a White Scottish participant in the rural school. It was early in the fieldwork and the first full day of interviews, but with some time to spare in the session Penny was asked if she had any further questions or comments to make. Unprompted, she outlines her views on equality. Penny was the first of several White Scottish participants in the study who were keen to cast themselves as tolerant, easy going and willing to embrace difference.

> I know what I'd like to change about the world... I'd like to make gender equality a priority. I've always thought there should be equality, it's a big thing. Also, gay rights and things –I'm also a big supporter of them. Also, race – equality for everyone, I think we should accept people for who they are, whether they're black white purple or whatever. Those are the main ones. I also think that everyone should have access to clean water… I think everyone should have the basic necessities of life, that women can walk in the streets and feel free about it, to have equal pay to men.
>
> Penny, interview 1, rural school

Penny focuses immediately on gender equality; however she quickly broadens out her statement to discuss equality more generally. Narratives around equality were clearly salient for many school leavers, even well-rehearsed, and seemed to be imbibed through a range of avenues, including school, peer groups, family and society more widely. In the quote above Penny voices the sentiments of many of her peers 'I think we should accept people for who they are, whether they're black, white, purple or whatever'. A number of pupils from the rural school described the impact of a school trip to Africa, and their subsequent interest in poverty and development issues in the Global South. In her final interview, Penny had left school and was undertaking a course at college. She reiterates her commitment to equality, outlining plans to raise funds for community projects in Rwanda and return to Africa to carry out volunteering. Interestingly, this inclusive language was often

not borne out by how Penny described her everyday experiences. Asked if she planned to stay in her home town in the future, she immediately describes the social and ethnic tensions in her own community.

Penny	I'm definitely getting away from here. I hate [[real emphasis]] [town]!
Helen	Tell me why
Penny	There are so many junkies, people on drugs and alcoholics just walking about the streets everywhere. Especially the street that I live on. I have loads of families that have moved in, that is families with twenty kids. No, it's just not a good place! I would not recommend [town] to someone who asked if they should move here.
Helen	You wouldn't?
Penny	No, just for the people that live here. I think [town] has got a lot [hesitates] well, it's not got a lot to offer but it's quite a nice for older people. Especially if all these younger people weren't just coming in…
Helen	So, you're frustrated by the younger people 'coming in'?
Penny	Yeah, and they're just… well the street I live on …. It's not like a way from town but it is a little bit away from town. It used to just have a lot of older people in it, but it's just been totally taken over by big massive families, living in all these council houses and stuff. There's a park beside me and stuff and people can't even walk through there without there being people either taking drugs there or doing things like that. So, it's just things like that get ruined. If I want to go there, I've got a little baby cousin, I wouldn't really feel safe taking her there because there are people sitting there taking drugs and drinking loads of alcohol. So, that's not really a very safe place for a little kid to be.

Penny, interview 1, rural school

Penny shows great compassion for the distant other, but is frustrated and intolerant of the challenge of poverty and its effects closer to home. This example illustrates a common disconnect between the language of equality across the interviews, and the failure to transfer this understanding to the local, the immediate and the personal. Her long-term aspirations (and her expectations of others) are directly influenced by her approach to difference; for example, she accepts some forms of difference, if they conform to expected norms, but rejects other forms if an individual seems to her to be less deserving or worthy. This quote shows how this limited acceptance of difference can begin to shift attention on to individuals for their own disadvantage rather than looking at the contextual and structural architecture of inequalities. Penny speaks pejoratively about people on the basis of their behaviour and position which, arguably, she associates with certain undesirable (under)classes (Jones, 2015; Savage, 2015).

In his interview, Kieran demonstrates a similar narrative and risks discussing the connections between race and disadvantage. He is at pains to emphasise that everyone is equal and difference is not important, yet it is evident that naming 'race' in an environment which appears to silence the importance of difference is fraught with difficulty for him, echoing Harries' arguments (2014, see literature review). Kieran is very tentative as he talks about the difference migrant background might have on aspirations and expectations.

Kieran	See here–especially in this school –I don't want to be racist, but the Polish kids or the kids from Russia – they don't hang about in one group. In my friendship group we've got a Russian. So people totally spread out and bond with other people. Some people, well they don't have an accent or anything! Its more that their parents have moved over here to give them a better life.
Helen	So, you would never come across racialised language or racism?
Kieran	I have heard it before, but I don't think it's a problem. If people want to come here fair enough, if they have a job, they should please themselves.
Helen	I guess your experiences [living] in Germany is interesting here too.
Kieran	Yeah, we never lived on a base. So they welcomed us, super! They helped us with moving in and moving out again. They were amazing. It is a shame it doesn't go as well here.
Helen	Do you think it doesn't go as well here?
Kieran	No. Well, here in [town] there was a Syrian family that were moved here. There was a lot of people really against it. I think that's wrong. I seen them before, I see them around [town] all the time. There just this little boy and he's the cutest little thing, he's so cute.
	Kieran, interview 2, rural school

Kieran begins positively, discussing the equality and diversity he observes in schools, but ultimately concludes that 'it is a shame it doesn't go as well here'. Throughout this exchange it is clear that Kieran encounters difficultly discussing racial(ised) difference. He appears to be concerned that by mentioning race, he will be constructed as a racist. This was an apprehension which other participants also showed; they appeared reluctant to admit that they notice ethnic difference. Interestingly, when Kieran is asked whether he has observed racialised language or racism, he is quick to suggests that it isn't a problem. He makes the assumption that if it is not noticed or discussed, then it does not exist. However, he quickly concedes that it *is* a reality locally. He describes the arrival of a Syrian family and the hostility he has observed to the new arrivals. Kieran's basis for accepting this family and other families who choose to move to the area is the perceived efforts

of those who arrive. Kieran constructs his idea of a 'healthy stranger' and suggests that if they have a job, they should please themselves'. This assumes migrants are 'under assimilative pressure to conform to the behavioural norm' (Puwar, 2004; 150). This fits with existing literature which suggests that the dominant culturalist paradigm devolves responsibility for 'fitting in' to the minority groups and migrants themselves. It assumes that the stranger will quickly fit in by sounding familiar ('they don't have an accent or anything') acting according to specific norms ('people totally spread out and bond with other people') or endearing themselves in other ways ('he's the cutest little thing'). It appears to promote a qualified acceptance of others, in line with neoliberal immigration rhetoric of the 'good immigrant', suggesting individuals should take responsibility for their own (economic) outcomes (Favell, 1998). In unexpected ways, this narrative was clearly evident in interviews with White Scottish young participants. The focus on embracing difference was not discussed at all by young people with a migrant background, who appeared more focused on downplaying difference all together, as will be explored in the next section.

7.3.2 Downplaying ethnic difference (whilst experiencing racism)

The examples so far have shown how White Scottish participants struggle to fully exemplify the unifying equalities narratives to which they subscribe. Their experiences reveal contradictions and limitations in their experiences of difference. However, this occupied participants across a range of ethnic backgrounds highlighting particular tensions for young people who had experienced racism and yet were keen to conform and downplay difference.

As described in a previous chapter, Ali's parents were born in Bangladesh and he demonstrates the tensions and dilemmas involved with migrant identities, yet he casts his experiences in an overwhelmingly positive light. In the quotes below it is clear that Ali wants to epitomise a unifying equality narrative which says difference exists but shouldn't and doesn't matter. Ali is reluctant to speak negatively about being a British Asian in Edinburgh, however it is clear he has thought through the differences and reflects on them with remarkable honesty.

Ali Before Edinburgh I lived in Birmingham for … two and a half years. I came [here] in 2007/8…

Helen Tell me about your experiences in Birmingham?

Ali Very different from Edinburgh! [laughs]

Helen How?

Ali Being Asian, there's lots of Asians and it makes you feel part of a bigger kinda community than you are in Edinburgh. So, even the school, I'm not gonna lie, there was more Asians. So I wasn't left out at all [hesitates] everyone's equal.

Helen So, as soon as you arrived in that school you felt part of that community.

Ali Yep [smiles] straight away! I didn't know English at the time either so that was quite good having friends that can speak my mother language.

Helen Okay, great. So you mentioned that you felt like everyone was treated equally.

Ali Equally as in [hesitates] it is just the same. There's hardly any trouble, not that there's trouble here or anything. It's equal here as well but being Asian [in Birmingham] it feels a bit more equal for some reason. It's a bit different from what I'm used to here.

Helen So, was that a bit of a shock when you arrived in Edinburgh? Did you have any other Asian friends when you were in Primary School?

Ali No! Not-at-all! [emphasis] [laughs]

Helen Okay. I know you say it doesn't feel unequal here but it feels different. Can you explain that in any other way?

Ali Being in an Asian community for two years got me used to being in that habit and being in that environment, whereas when I came here no-one is Asian! [laughs] So it felt, it didn't feel uncomfortable, it felt weird at first. But then after a few months went by everything got back to normal again.

(later in the interview)

Helen I'm going to ask you a really hard question, making you think about the idea of 'settling' and life, way-ahead, in the future. If you were to have your own family, do you think you'd prefer to bring them up in a place like Edinburgh where you might not have the Asian support and community or would you prefer them to be in a place like Birmingham or would you ever consider moving to Bangladesh for the first time?

Ali Not moving to Bangladesh, no! Staying in the UK, I'd love to live in Edinburgh for the rest of my life [pause] but with that [Asian] community. But obviously, that's not likely to happen!

Helen Mmmm, okay yeah. Have your family found a Bangladeshi community here in Edinburgh?

Ali There is community. Compared with Birmingham, it's really small! I mean, we do get along with them, they're really nice people as well, however it just doesn't feel the same.

Ali, interview 1, urban school

Ali makes some fascinating observations. He resists the idea that Scotland is not as equal, perhaps so as not to be viewed as a victim or to maintain the idea that equality exists. However, he admits when he lived in Birmingham, 'being Asian it feels a bit more equal for some reason'. The degree to which Ali feels different, is important to him. However, again he struggles for language and legitimacy to

discuss this. As a white female researcher, he is likely to feel inhibited and unlikely to elaborate on this (something discussed in the next chapter). However, it is clear that his experiences and understanding of permissible difference is small, he says 'after a few months everything got back to normal again'. Time elapsed and Ali suggests that he is able to feel more at ease with feeling different. He adjusts perhaps through strategies which are implicit and internal rather than explicit and external, either way he is able to minimise evidence of his difference. Tellingly, when he discusses the future for his own family, he describes a hybrid of all his experiences to date, a Bangladeshi community within Edinburgh. This is not an uncommon expression and ties closely to work which found similar desires for co-ethnic community in a context of diversity (Phillips, 2007; Stillwell & Phillips, 2006). In this honest response about the future, he uses his own experience and views to counter the prevailing discourse where difference is eliminated, and minority groups are encouraged to 'fit in' with the majority (White) group.

Like Penny, Kieran and Ali, Akash is keen to adopt the language of inclusion. However, in his case this is quickly contradicted with his own experiences. This extract is from his first interview where Akash is keen to deny the existence of racism, despite his own experiences of it.

Akash I don't see the differences. I'm not really a judgmental person. Even if they weren't my religion I would never say 'all Muslims are terrorists' because it's not true. And also not all Christians are KKK and not all Jewish people are bad. Because they do use religion as an excuse and that's why we get bad names, through religions.

Helen Do you ever hear that then?

Akash You do hear a lot of social media saying that ISIS … well it's aimed more at Muslim people, it's about Islam. But you don't really hear about white people and the KKK. I'll see on social media, say the newspaper will say 'This Muslim man killed a white person.' They would say 'This white man with a mental health disorder shot at a school' they would say that. But if they were a Muslim it would be 'terrorist' 'black thug' things like that. Especially in America. Especially after Trump, he wants to ban all Muslims, all Mexicans, all Latinos. But he's a sexist person as well.

Helen Within America perhaps, there are some extremes and I wonder how different or similar it is here? Are you ever conscious of your race in Scotland?

Akash Not really, because see Scotland? There are not that many racist people. I mean, yeah I know, when I was younger and with my mum I had two or three junkies… like plumbers... well workers, calling us Paki's from White Vans but other than that no one else. But I think I am getting more self-conscious because of my age. When I'm on the bus, I have a beard like this, you get old grannies just looking at me with dirty looks. I wanna just ask them 'why are you looking at me?'

Helen Is this increasing do you think?

Akash Even before Brexit. I think I was going on a trip to a university, the construction site one. My mate told me, that woman next to you on the bus was looking at you for the whole journey. I was like what really? I was just minding my own business. It's especially old grannies, I don't get why they think I'm suspicious when I'm not. I'm just an innocent sixteen-year-old.

Akash, interview 1, urban school

In the first line (above), Akash makes a profound (yet not unique) assumption that seeing differences leads to or reflects a judgemental attitude. The result of this pervasive idea is an environment which limits discussion and obfuscates reality. Akash though, goes on to make general observations with remarkable candidness (in a first interview with a white female researcher). He discusses the role of social media and the rise in extremist language, he appears well aware of contemporary race debates in American society. However, when the focus is shifted to Scotland, he is quick to downplay racism. He says 'There are not many racist people', but quickly follows this with two accounts of racism. In the second interview with Akash, he discusses his Asian friendship group and says almost in passing 'We don't really get judged that much, other than being called terrorists for a joke obviously.

That's just normal now!'. It was evident that he appears to have normalised hostility and no longer views this as remarkable or unexpected. This is a point which will be expanded on in the next chapter. Over the course of the three interviews Akash repeatedly raises themes of race and ethnicity, downplaying their role whilst underscoring their relevance in his everyday experiences. In summary he, like Ali, appears to interpret the equalities narrative as difference exists but shouldn't and doesn't matter to our life chances and life experiences so there is no need to acknowledge it.

These examples highlight a disconnect between young people's equality narratives and lived experiences of difference that can be seen as a paradox in neoliberal narratives of educational transition. Penny, Kieran, Ali and Akash each illustrate this in different ways but together highlight that regardless of ethnic background, participants sought to downplay the importance of race and ethnicity while at the same time many participants drew attention to the significance of difference in their interviews. As a result, Ali and Akash were 'caught in contradictory processes as they talked about multiple levels of experience' (Harries 2014; 1120). These neutralised account of race narratives might have emerged as an attempt not to be seen as a victim or as different or as falling outside the permissible lines of difference. However, participants from all ethnic backgrounds appeared to struggle to name racism and at times overtly deny their experiences of racism, despite experiencing it. Participants from White Scottish background were less willing to discuss ethnic differences and the difference of race, because by naming racism they feared they would be constructed as a racist.

This paradox presents further questions, such as how this apparent contradiction matters: what are the implications for simultaneously experiencing and denying racism? This revisits the first argument in this chapter, which is that characteristics can intersect to compound disadvantage. The evidence in this chapter has revealed that dominant narratives on equality of opportunity have been widely accepted by young people, often with little critical reflection. This narrative has not (yet) procured a language to describe difference or the freedom to discuss it. In turn, the lack of confidence to discuss, manage and mediate difference is never developed. Ultimately, this inclusive narrative serves to deny the identities and experiences, whilst ostensibly being attentive to them. These findings suggest that this paradox is important, because there is a danger that when faced with

disadvantage and discrimination young people will not have the resilience to respond, given the belief that any lack of success (or any inequality) is the result of their own action/inaction.

7.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has presented two key arguments, first that multiple axes of identification and difference intersect and can compound disadvantage. For example, the disadvantage for Black, African and Caribbean males compared with females. Or the limited difference living in a more affluent neighbourhood makes for White Poles, compared with all other ethnic groups. Secondly, it has been argued that there is a disconnect between narratives of equality and the lived experiences of it. Despite a faithful rehearsal of these narratives, the quantitative findings suggest that race/gender/poverty do interact to reinforce and at times mitigate disadvantage. Young people from migrant and minority backgrounds are required to negotiate the disadvantage of minority status in a context where difference is silenced, or at least assumed it should not make a significant difference to outcomes or experiences. Importantly, it is worth noticing that these sections have highlighted that it is the intersection of ethnicity/race and migrant status that marks people out as different (even when this difference is silenced by them and others).

This chapter set out to answer the third research question in this study: how do poverty, ethnicity and geography intersect to create distinct pathways for young people from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds? It has used a combination of quantitative and qualitative data to understand the mediating role of a number of aspects of identity and how they interact with one another. Using innovative methodologies, including a debate-style activity in the focus groups, it was possible to uncover contested ideas about whether all young people have the same opportunities to succeed. The focus group provided an opportunity for participants to debate and discuss this emotive topic and showed the strength of the self-actualising narrative among many students. Most participants seemed to hold the view that if you try hard enough, you can always achieve. This powerful narrative

obscures wider, structural causes for differential outcomes and experiences and can stifle debate. For example, the statistical evidence reveals the significant difference that living in an area of multiple deprivation can have on likelihood of progressing to higher education. This intersection between class and ethnicity has been illustrated through the experiences of Faye and Kieran (both White Scottish participants) who describe the impact of family and class on their aspirations and outcomes. These examples are set in contrast to two students with a migration background, Lili from Lithuania and Lucas from Poland. These students appear to have divergent ideas about the importance of personal effort and the structural influences on their futures. It has been argued that this may, in part, be due to differing levels of social and cultural capital. The final intersection to be explored was between gender, ethnicity and geography. The quantitative evidence shows that gender and ethnicity do intersect, to create different outcomes for male and female school leavers.. In summary, this chapter found strong evidence that axes of differences do intersect to shape post-school outcomes in complex ways that often compound disadvantage. The chapter also highlights that these layers of difference are often underestimated, and their consequences downplayed, in young people's narratives.

In particular, the second part of the chapter has discussed the fundamental disconnect between the dominant equalities narrative articulated by young people and their everyday experiences of difference. This has been termed a paradox in neoliberal narratives of educational transition. The chapter has argued that the paradox is characterised by an adherence to neoliberal equalities narratives and difficulty discussing difference, with students keen to distance themselves from racism and narratives which oppose inclusion. Analysis of the interview material found that discussion of difference is often muted and debates about the importance of difference are restricted and an environment is created that potentially inhibits the identification, reporting and tackling of discrimination. Importantly, it has been illustrated that this occurs despite young people from minority ethnic backgrounds acknowledging experiences of racism.

Chapter 8 Discussion

8.1 Introduction

This study has examined the experiences and outcomes of school leavers in Scotland, with a specific focus on young people from migrant and minority backgrounds. Evidence in the extant literature shows that for young people approaching the end of compulsory education, their academic achievements and post-school transitions remain closely associated with their family backgrounds (Eisenstadt, 2016; Ralston et al., 2016) including ethnic background, parental occupation and country of birth (UNICEF, 2018). The preceding chapters have raised questions about the persistence of educational inequalities, how educational success is constructed and measured within neoliberal educational environments and how minority identities are negotiated in the transition to adulthood.

This discussion chapter begins with a summary of the results, structured by answering the research questions posed in the Introduction (Section 1.2). Next, the conceptual contributions are reprised by drawing on two major themes in the thesis, first educational success and how it is constructed and measured, and secondly migrant identities and how they are negotiated, asserted and constructed. Next, the chapter draws together the key methodological contributions of the study and reflects on the mixed methods approach. In conclusion, there is a discussion of the implications of this research, indicating areas for future research in this field.

8.2 Empirical contributions

8.2.1 Key findings

Four research questions were posed at the outset of this study, the first three address the outcomes and experiences of school leavers and the final question explores the contribution of the methodological approach to this field of research.

This section draws out the key empirical contributions by addressing the first three questions and the final research question will be discussed in Section 8.4 below.

In summary, the four research questions are:

1. What factors influence the outcomes of school leavers in Scotland?
2. How does migrant and minority background shape experiences of educational transition?
3. How do poverty, ethnicity and geography intersect to create distinct pathways for young people from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds?
4. What does a mixed method approach bring to understanding in this field?

The first research question used both quantitative and qualitative findings to explore both what differences exist in the post-school destinations of school leavers and what factors influence these outcomes. Evidence revealed that ethnicity, gender and deprivation all have a bearing on educational outcomes. Ethnic background was highly correlated with attending university after leaving school. All minority ethnic groups (apart from White Poles) showed a higher probability of progressing to Higher Education than White Scottish pupils. However, there were large differences between ethnic groups, with Asian Chinese and Asian Bangladeshi the most likely to attend Higher Education (74 per cent and 60 per cent respectively) while only 41 per cent of White Other and 30 per cent of White Polish pupils progressed to Higher Education. Statistical models were fitted to try to explain the reasons for these ethnic differences. The stepwise approach ensured variables were added gradually, these included individual characteristics (gender, Level of English, eligibility for free school meals); school characteristics (number of pupils, SIMD); and regional characteristics (level of rurality and number of Universities in the region). The regression models could only partially explain the reasons for the heterogeneity in destinations of ethnic groups. After controlling for a range of factors and exploring hierarchies within the data through a multilevel model, it was still not possible to account for the significant ethnic differences in the outcomes of school leavers. Previous research in this area has concluded that socio-economic factors (such as household income) are the main reason for ethnic differences in educational attainment (Dollmann, 2017; Hwang & Domina, 2016), however these findings challenge this assumption. The quantitative findings

exposed the extent to which progression to particular post-school destinations varies by ethnic background regardless of socio-economic background. The sophisticated modelling of these outcomes shows the relatively high rates of attendance at Higher Education for some ethnic groups and not others.

These findings were set alongside qualitative fieldwork and together these data were interrogated to explore what factors influenced outcomes. In-depth interviews with school leavers uncovered a broader debate about meanings of success. A number of participants rejected the notion that success is linked to educational outcomes and career paths. Success was defined more broadly as being 'happy' or 'achieving your personal goals' (often family orientated rather than career driven). However, these narratives of alternative forms of success were often inconsistent and contradictory. For example, conventional markers of educational success such as going to university and getting good grades at school were clearly paramount to many participants. This tension, between conforming to external measures of success and rejecting them in favour of pursuing happiness and personal fulfilment, was most vivid among young people from minority and migrant backgrounds. These students appeared to manage their own expectations by promoting the idea that success is about family or happiness and not about wealth or career. Yet, at the same time these students admit that, educational outcomes are vitally important and describe the pressure of working hard to meet high personal expectations as well as those of parents, teachers and family networks further afield. The qualitative work demonstrated that the destinations of school leavers is further complicated by divergent constructions of success. These interpretations of success speak directly to the patterns identified through the quantitative analysis for some groups and not others. For example, the idea that attending university was a key marker of success was a frequent response from participants with an Asian background and in turn this was reflected in the statistics, with this group more likely to attend Higher Education than any other ethnic group. However, in other ways the statistical evidence confounded the qualitative findings. Participants with White Polish and White Other backgrounds also articulated aspirations to attend Higher Education and linked this with constructions of success but quantitative analysis revealed that these students were the least likely to attend university of all ethnic groups.

This first research question has shown that outcomes are influenced by a range of complex factors, including ethnic and socio-economic background. Significantly, it demonstrates that success itself is understood distinctly by young people from a range of migrant and minority backgrounds. This finding raises questions about how success is constructed and measured in the context of neoliberal educational environments and this conceptual contribution will be discussed at length below (section 8.3.1).

The second question, 'How does migrant and minority background shape experiences of educational transition?' was addressed primarily using the qualitative research approaches, gathered using a mix of in-depth interviews and focus groups. The findings revealed that many young people in the transition to adulthood demonstrate a strong commitment to family and peer networks. The shaping influence of parents is consistent with the literature (Punch, 2002; Shah et al., 2010) and due, in part, to the age of the participants who all lived at home and to varying degrees received input from parents and carers. However, young people from migrant and minority backgrounds articulated a distinctive attachment to family. Many individuals were keen to honour and repay a sense of debt they felt they owed to their parents. This sense of responsibility raises questions about the impact of migrant identity through transition, which will be discussed as a major overarching theme below (section 8.3.2). Students from these backgrounds appear to learn resilience and flexibility through their experiences, although this is also evident in some young people without a migration background. The reasons for these differences can be explained in part by the intersections between axes of difference which are addressed through the final research question.

The third research question asked, 'How do poverty, ethnicity and geography intersect to create distinct pathways for young people from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds?' The research sought to address this question by again bringing together the quantitative and qualitative approaches, integrating these to establish how, specifically, these aspects of identity and experience may intersect. The chapter proposed two main arguments, first that multiple axes of difference intersect and can compound disadvantage and secondly that there is a disconnect between narratives of equality and the lived experiences of it. Two aspects of neoliberalism become crucial in this chapter. First the emphasis on individual narratives; the suggestion that if you try hard enough you will achieve. Secondly,

the suggestion that neoliberalism devolves responsibility for inequality away from structures, institutions and society and towards the individual suffering the injustice.

The quantitative evidence showed that gender and ethnicity do intersect, to create different outcomes for male and female school leavers from different ethnic backgrounds. For example, Black/African and Caribbean females were much more likely to progress to Higher Education than males and Indian males were more slightly likely than females to go to university. Differences such as gender and ethnicity interact. The findings also revealed the interactions between neighbourhood deprivation and ethnicity. Revealing how little this seems to relate to the trajectories of some young people (Asian Chinese, Asian Indian – with consistently high attendance at university and White Polish with consistently low levels) and how much it affects others (White British, White Other British and Irish and Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups). In summary, analysis found strong evidence that axes of differences do intersect to shape post-school outcomes in complex ways that often compound disadvantage. In summary White Polish boys remain the most disadvantaged in this respect.

Drawing on the qualitative work there was strong evidence of a self-actualising narrative among many students who appeared to downplay or under estimate the way family background, discussed in terms of class, could mitigate or exacerbate different forms of disadvantage. Analysis of the longitudinal interview material revealed a disconnect between the dominant equalities narrative articulated by young people and their everyday experiences of difference. This was termed a paradox in neoliberal narratives of educational transition. The chapter argued that the paradox is characterised by an adherence to neoliberal equalities narratives and difficulty discussing difference, with students keen to distance themselves from racism and narratives which oppose inclusion. Evidence from the fieldwork revealed that discussion of difference is often muted and debates about the importance of difference are restricted, this leads to an environment that potentially inhibits the identification, reporting and tackling of discrimination. Importantly, it has been illustrated that this occurs despite young people from minority ethnic backgrounds acknowledging experiences of racism. The empirical findings from this research raised wider questions about the result of a highly individualised system which appears to offer personalisation and choice but, in reality, some

students may be able to maximise and convert these opportunities whilst others will not.

In conclusion, this study makes several key empirical contributions. They are that ethnic and migrant differences in post-school destination exist and can be considered to be inequalities, with some groups at a much higher risk of disadvantage than others.

Secondly, the empirical work has shown that although some differentials follow expectations from the literature, for example the success of Chinese students, there are also distinct experiences for minorities in Scotland which have not been identified before. For example, the finding that Polish school leavers have a lower than expected participation in Higher Education and that socio-economic, level of English and educational attainment cannot account for these differences is an original contribution. The empirical work also demonstrates that living in a deprived area variously affects young people of different ethnicities, with young Poles being particularly detrimentally affected in terms of post-school destination. These original findings have not been evidenced before in Scotland. In previous studies of educational attainment, ethnic differences have been said to be largely explained by family background, however this research has identified statistically significant differences between ethnic groups after accounting for individual and school characteristics. These important findings raise questions about the integration of new migrants in Scotland and, specifically, within the education system. It challenges the idea of 'Scottish exceptionalism', that the country is culturally different from England, with one of those differences being that race and ethnicity is not a concern for Scotland (Davidson, Liinpää, McBride, & Virdee, 2018).

Thirdly, the research finds that educational structures do not account for the diverse and sometimes contradictory understandings of success that young people are negotiating. Educational transitions were found to be shaped by migrant and minority backgrounds, sometimes in positive ways and at other times adversely. There is evidence that for some young people racism has shaped their experience of transition, yet at the same time racism is often hidden or under-reported in order to conform to the narrative of equality and fairness which schools promote. This represents a challenge to the founding principles of the Scottish Curriculum for

Excellence which places values of inclusion and personal achievement at its core. Historically, Scottish education has been regarded as less socio-economically segregated and fragmented than elsewhere in the UK (Croxford, 2001; Raffe, 2004). However, this research contributes to a growing body of work which shows that educational inequalities persist, despite significant investment to address the challenge (Barnard, 2017; Sosu & Ellis, 2014). This study has provided new empirical evidence that poverty, ethnicity and geography intersect to create distinct pathways for young people from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds. Crucially, this research highlights the importance of examining ethnicity alongside other axes of difference in order to understand educational transition and broader structural inequalities in the UK.

8.3 Conceptual contributions

8.3.1 Narratives of success

Educational success is constructed. Extensive debates in the literature about standard-setting and cultures of performance (Baird & Gray, 2016; Priestley et al., 2012; Priestley & Sinnema, 2014) are echoed in public discourses of educational success. Each year the publication of the national examination results trigger fresh debate, privately and publicly, as to whether educational qualifications are getting easier and whether school leavers are adequately prepared for the world of work (Stannard, 2018). Behind the headlines, sit a complex set of assessments and examinations which are used to award qualifications and evaluate the performance of individual candidates. In turn these are then used to evaluate the performance of staff, schools, regional authorities and national strategy. Qualifications and the educational curricula which surround them have a tangible and direct impact on young people in the transition to adulthood. It is these debates around what it means to be successful, who defines this and how these ideas are reconfigured through transition, that will form the focus of discussion in this section.

In Scotland, the last decade has seen extensive educational reform. National qualifications were redesigned and relaunched, with pupils first sitting the new

national qualifications in June 2014. These assessments are the culmination of the Curriculum for Excellence which offers an integrated curriculum for pupils aged 3-18. The Scottish Government has made equity a key priority for the new curriculum, focusing on ensuring equality of outcomes rather than simply opportunity (see 2.1.2). This approach, set out in a recent Government policy called Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education, describes the need 'to focus on improving outcomes for our children' and concedes that 'a child's circumstances – where they live, their family's circumstances – still have a disproportionate impact on their chances of success." (Scottish Government, 2016a; 3). It is in this context of inequality, and a political environment which has committed to ensure equity for all that these debates about how success is measured and defined are so important.

Through the course of this research, the young people repeatedly returned to the theme of success. School leavers are naturally focussed on 'results' and 'grades' and plans for the future, yet in many cases they were torn about what constitutes success and the implications this held for their own futures. The language of personal achievement and reaching ones' potential was foremost in the minds of students when success was discussed directly. These sentiments are underpinned by a strong narrative which places priority on individual effort and personalised success. Through the focus groups it was evident that pupils believed that success was attainable for everyone although people had different abilities. Success was personal, subjective but eminently achievable; contingent on hard work, effort and enough determination to succeed. This notion of individualised success was, in many ways, not a surprising discovery. It is a dominant discourse in current Western cultures. 'Think It. Do It. Change It' (Grzeskowitz, 2016) is a mantra which is propagated through film, fiction and the mainstream media and endorsed by politicians and popular culture alike. Logically, it was also evident in the language and actions of young people in the Scottish educational context.

This research found that young people were drawn to this conceptualisation of success yet were frequently conflicted about the lived reality of it. Personal experiences were leading some to recognise contradictions and question how success should be understood. Many students, particularly those with a migrant

background, were keen to embrace the idea that future success would be based on their own efforts. Interestingly, there was also evidence of training which pupils had received on developing a 'growth mindset', based on the work of influential Stanford Professor Carol Dweck. The language and approach of Dweck, who discusses the psychology of success (Dweck, 2008), was evident when young people discussed their own agency in transition. However, under closer scrutiny a contradiction appeared between the theory and practice. A difference opened up between what young people said about success (it is individual and internally set) and their experiences of it (it is public and externally set).

Over the course of the study many students admitted that they were adhering to an externally set standard and some expressed frustration about this. Young people in the final stages of school are acutely aware of what success means to their parents, teachers and peers as well as the standards they hold for themselves. The young people in this study appeared to have two competing narratives of success. Some participants felt an unconscious expectation (either from family or school or both) that going to university was in reality the main performance indicator. This was especially apparent for students who were interviewed in school on each of the three occasions. However, even those who had left school and were now at College or in employment planned to return to education in the belief that this would secure greater long-term happiness, status or financial gain. When asked about what successful school leavers 'looked like', this was usually defined either by going to university, knowing what you wanted to do or 'getting good grades'. So, success was frequently seen as achieving a normative standard, despite discussion of the opposite. This ties closely with literature reviewed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.1.3) which has problematised the current approach to measuring educational success (Biesta, 2009; Priestley et al., 2012). It raises questions about whether the Curriculum for Excellence, as Priestley and Sinnema (2014) argue lacks coherence and gives mixed messages about the place of knowledge.

The significance of geography, social class and ethnicity in defining success

This study has paid particular attention to the shaping influence of migrant and ethnic backgrounds. Constructions of success did not always fall along lines of

migration history; however some differences were evident. Young people from White Scottish backgrounds were more likely to articulate that their parents' primary aim for them was to be happy and not necessarily to pursue a specific career path or mode of success. At times this construction of success was placed under scrutiny and tested. For example, a number of White Scottish students with excellent grades were choosing not to go to university at all, others possessed the grades to pursue medicine or law, but had decided to opt for less prestigious careers which require lower grades than they had achieved. In some cases, it was teachers, rather than parents, who were encouraging the student to aim for a specific career. These students, however, were making choices based on what they hoped they would enjoy rather than the final salary. These findings connect to the patterns identified through the quantitative analysis which revealed that White Scottish school leavers are less likely to attend Higher Education than all other ethnic groups (apart from White Polish).

In contrast, young people with migrant and minority backgrounds were more contested about what constitutes success. As described elsewhere in the thesis (Chapter 6, section 6.2) the expectations of family (at home and abroad) were often dominant and therefore success was often closely connected to academic attainment and career progression. However, for migrants specifically, the process of transition, experiences of exam taking and choice making, were challenging some of their understandings of success. For example, many participants in the first interview subscribed to the idea that success is possible through hard work and application, often more vehemently than their non-migrant peers. As Hadjar and Scharf (2018), suggest the value of education seemed higher for migrants as it was a means of fitting in and overcoming disadvantages associated with being a migrant. However, this study has shown that in later interviews, these beliefs were being challenged. Some participants had experienced 'success' perhaps securing university offers and better than expected grades but for others, their grades were lower than anticipated and would no longer guarantee them a place at university. The effort and hard work did not appear to be 'paying off' as promised and for some young people this was proving demotivating and disorientating. Despite this, many students showed remarkable determination and resilience. Like Moskal (2014), this research finds despite the disappointments, many migrant young people use their migration experience to support integration and overcome significant setbacks. Therefore some young people retain their original notions of success,

perhaps blending them with broader conceptions of success or moderating their expectations. So, for example, in the final interview Ana says ‘‘I want to be happy –to get on well with my parents, find my way, find a really good job I’m interested in’. She combines the idea that happiness will be connected to more than just work, however, she also recognises her career may be a means to achieving the other things she longs for.

Geography

Place has been explored at several scales in this project, which also set out to understand the spatial factors which shape transition. With reference to success, the young people from rural areas were marginally less focussed on the external-markers of success such as career and exam results. However, this may have also been a function of the sample (see Table 4-8 on page 104). In the urban school there was a high proportion of pupils from lower socio-economic backgrounds and the rural school was more mixed. Very few participants in the focus group in the rural school mentioned exams being a marker of success, the emphasis was on happiness rather than careers. However, in the urban school there seemed to be a much closer connection to achieving particular grades. In some ways, this result is surprising given that it might be expected that more middle class students would place greater emphasis on achieving particular grades. Participants in the urban school demonstrated this focus on academic achievement but balanced it with a focus on the workplace, often viewing having a secure job as critical to success. This could be the result of the opportunities for work and study in a city, which were more salient for urban pupils and therefore were more likely to be used as markers of success. This connects with research reviewed earlier (Section 3.3.6) by Reynolds (2015), who concludes that a sense of place is critical to youth transition. Like Reynolds (2015), this research finds that specific places were important to young people, Although hard to prove, it is possible that notions of success are derived from knowledge of the local area and the acquisition of specific forms of social and cultural capital in these areas. The focus on the labour market by some participants in the urban school may the intersection between geography and social class which combined to create differing perspectives on employment as a marker of success.

As well as these distinctions across space, there was also evidence of differences over time. The longitudinal nature of the study allowed multiple snapshots of the experiences of transition and provided a window on how, for some young people, plans unravel over time. In many cases, students were undeterred by the uncertainty of not 'getting the right grades' or switching plans repeatedly. This unpredictability was unsettling for some, but remarkably untroubling for others. There were a number of factors which contributed to these different reactions. Students described their personality traits and family backgrounds as important

which concurs with the work of Punch who used similar multi-sited and longitudinal approaches in a study on youth transition in Bolivia (Punch, 2002). Like Punch's work, this research shows that decision making can be relatively spontaneous and dynamic but also that relationships (family, peers, teachers) play a key role in enabling and constraining youth transitions.

One observation, with potential policy relevance, links to work reviewed earlier by Choi (2017). His research found that some students depended heavily on support from teachers through transition. Similarly, this study identifies the impact of mentoring relationships in the ups and downs of transition. Often it was not described as mentoring, but the presence of an influential adult was often a key factor in adjusting to seasons of flux, of success and disappointment, someone who could narrate, rationalise and reassure. For some students this was a parent or relative and for others this was a teacher, often a subject teacher who was well informed about their academic ability. For young people from migrant and minority backgrounds as well as those from less affluent backgrounds, these relationships were referred to more often and seemed to be relied upon heavily in periods of change and uncertainty.

Social class or capital

The role of social class on transition was discussed in the Chapter 3 (section 3.3.4) and drew on the work of Linda McDowell (McDowell, 2000, 2002). Her longitudinal work on white working class boys may be particularly relevant here. Like McDowell, this study reveals that working class school leavers did not fulfil the stereotypes which so often burdens them, aspirations were typified with a desire to leave school, find work and enjoy financial security. This vision of white working class contradicts many of the tropes of disaffected school leavers. In this study, it was interesting to add multiple dimensions this analysis and observe the interaction of class and ethnic background (these intersections are discussed more fully in Chapter 7). The confluence of class and migration history were witnessed most clearly through the focus groups in an activity which asked pupils to define success, the key differences were not just between young people of different ethnic backgrounds but also different socio-economic groups. Many pupils from more affluent backgrounds articulating the need to 'reach your potential' and 'fulfil your

ambitions' (despite also describing privately the pressure to achieve academically, too). In contrast, participants from less economically advantaged backgrounds, regardless of migrant history, saw success as 'having a degree' or having financial security ('nice car, big house'). Analysis showed that young people with a migration background became more contested about success where they had less social and cultural capital. This adds further evidence to the case presented by Sime et al. (2018) who suggest that the absence of desirable economic and cultural capital may limit the ability of some students to fulfil their aspirations and take full advantage of their educational opportunities. The combination of ethnicity, social class and migrant status conspire to limit possibilities and increase a sense of isolation and marginalisation.

Reflecting more broadly on inequalities and constructions of success it is possible to see how this dominant narrative of success will over time allow social inequality to increase. Dorling (2015) argues that those who have attained power in society through success in its educational system then structure and re-structure that system to their own children's advantage. In subtle ways, it was possible to see that the 'work hard enough and you will succeed' narrative would serve to advantage some of the participants at the expense of the rest. Through the focus group and across the interviews, there seemed a blindness to the possible barriers to success which were not the 'fault' of an individual. The pervasive neoliberal philosophy which seeks to devolve responsibility to individuals and encourage personal responsibility was unmistakable in these encounters. What was less clear was whether, as Dorling argues, the evils of 'elitism, exclusion, prejudice and greed' are deliberately propagated to gain advantage by the 'elite' (Dorling, 2015) or whether as Putnam suggests it is simply a function of failing economic policies and a lack of empathy for the poor (Putnam, 2015).

In conclusion, young people are skilled at managing multifaceted definitions of success, yet they can also be conflicted by these, with the risk of this creating despair. Pupils adopt competing narratives about what success is, caught between wanting to resist traditional forms of success whilst acknowledging their participation in it. Some pupils are familiar with narrating their own failure and challenge normative measures of success. The mixed messages young people are subject to in terms of success being both relative (to one's own previous outcomes) and absolute (in comparison to others) leave some young people

vulnerable to despair, which can be seen as one aspect of injustice and inequality (Dorling, 2018). These findings also raise important questions about potentially creating a generation unprepared for failure. The effects of exclusion, elitism, prejudice and greed as Dorling defines them can corrode a sense of self and create the disease of our age 'despair' (with conditions such as depression and anxiety). Therefore, it is important that if young people through their experiences of transition are feeling isolated, disconnected, unwelcome and excluded then this needs to be addressed. However, this research has also pointed to a remarkably buoyant and resilient group.

8.3.2 Minority identities are negotiated, asserted and constructed

The second conceptual contribution of this thesis is in understandings of how minority identities are negotiated, asserted and constructed in the transition to adulthood. Throughout the research phase, the theme of shifting migrant identities emerged in a number of unexpected ways. Initially the topic was approached by asking about national identity and to what extent individuals felt a resonance with Scotland and the UK. However, this direct approach was quickly superseded, allowing for more nuanced and complicated ideas to emerge through the three interviews. As Jenkins (2014) and McDowell (1999) suggest, identity was often so embedded and integral to one's outlook that is difficult to measure, assess or critique it. The longitudinal methodology transformed understandings of this complex concept. It allowed a rapport to be developed with participants, and gradually many young people felt comfortable discussing sensitive issues such as identity and belonging and experiences of integration and exclusion. The semi-structured interviews allowed for wide ranging discussion and debate on ethnic and migrant identity and allowed young people to indirectly (as well as directly at times) engage with the idea that they variously construct, assert and resist their migrant or minority identity.

Existing research on the role of migrant and minority backgrounds on identity formation (Laoire et al., 2016; Nandi & Platt, 2015; van Geel & Mazzucato, 2018)

has focused on the agency of young people. From a range of epistemological standpoints, these studies have sought to shift the focus from understanding identity as articulated by adults, towards the perspective of young people. This study has set out to maintain this approach and embedded in the research design was the notion that young migrants are not simply incidental passive participants in the migration process (Sime, 2017). Through the longitudinal fieldwork, it became clear that constructing and maintaining identity was a key preoccupation of transition and an instrument for demonstrating agency and retaining control. Reynolds (2007) suggests that this phase in the life course can be particularly important in developing 'race consciousness' (Reynolds, 2007; 395) and and thinking about ethnic and racial identity. This was also apparent among the participants in this study. As van Geel and Mazzucato (2018) highlight, this was particularly important for migrant young people. In this research, individuals could be said to create elaborate identities which were multifarious, contingent and dynamic (McAreavey, 2017).

My own preconceptions about identity being linked to external markers of heritage (a passport, the location of close family members) were quickly confronted through the fieldwork. Migrants and minority young people spoke remarkably positively about their identities and in most circumstances seemed to cope well with uncertainty and managing numerous affiliations. They demonstrated an ability to adjust and recalibrate their identity in different situations. Further questions in the second interview illustrated that these tools are learned quickly and from one another. With some pride, participants including Lucas and Craig switch between their national identities. They described a sense of confidence about their identity which empowers them to use their migrant identity as a form of capital; to see it as leverage in situations and view it as an asset or a resource. Lili and Ana were keen to remind me that they can speak other languages and treasure these newly acquired 'resources' with pride and view them as a vehicle for further success. Some young people were able to describe the ways in which they could harness intangible capital which had been gained through migration. For example, Sasha, Ana and Reyna all acknowledge the process of migration in shaping them and indeed constructing their identity in some way. Chapter 5 illustrated the multiple ways school leavers were harnessing their migrant experiences in transition; including developing contingency plans, coping with disappointment and developing confidence through language learning. This led to a realisation that

some young migrants may use their migrant identity in specific ways to gain what was termed ‘cosmopolitan capital’, trading on their migrant identity in specific situations to assert distinction or gain some advantage. This relates to the findings of Fuligni et al. (1999) who suggested that rather than restricting a young person’s ability to settle into a culture which focuses on individualism, retaining a strong commitment to family may in fact support their evolving migrant identity and support transition. Similarly, the findings supports Moskal’s assertion that migrant experience can be used to enable integration and overcome perceived disadvantages (Moskal, 2014). This study found examples of young migrants drawing on the cultural capital derived from the educational practices in their home country. Some participants were able to use migrant capital to lever advantage and compensate for deficits in other areas (such as limited English or a lack of knowledge of ‘the system’). For many young migrants this identity is central, they find it an ever-present feature of life, especially in school. In many instances, migrant young people saw themselves as distinct, but they also want to position themselves as a ‘good migrant’, someone who wants to fit in, get a job, have a better life, attend university and progress in life, whether that is in the UK or elsewhere.

Resisting migrant identity

As well as constructing a complex migrant identity which navigates expectations in the country of birth (or their parents’ birth), there were also examples of young people resisting their migrant identities, either at home or at school. Interestingly, these examples were sometimes hard to articulate. However, the scarcity of material on how migrant identity is downplayed is an interesting finding in itself. This was almost imperceptible, but a couple of young people dared to describe their experiences. Primarily this emerged when discussing the past. As Whittle, Brewster and Medd (2018) suggest, often describing failures or challenges in the past tense seems a safer and more acceptable or palatable approach. Retrospective narratives allow people to share experiences of exclusion from a subsequent position of inclusion and acceptance. It allows the participant a sense of distance and serves to depersonalise and distance us from the lived experience of exclusion. All migrant pupils were asked about their first day at school in the UK

and this provided a wealth of emotive, affectual and embodied narratives on identity and belonging. These highly individualised narratives serve as a reminder of the deeply scarring experiences of new schools and new starts, where expectations are high and the lived reality is hard. McAreavey (2017) argues that migrant identity is a permanent consideration in the everyday encounters of migrants. Indeed, the narratives of young people in this study showed this to be the case, that identities were shifting constantly at times identity was enacted (internally) and sometimes assigned (externally, by others) (McAreavey, 2017). Both of these forms of identity were observed through the qualitative fieldwork as was the idea that juggling identities can be disruptive and unsettling. Listening to the perspective of migrant young people, recounting experiences of the classroom, the playground and along the High Street revealed that many young people are acutely aware of these conflicting ascriptions of identity. This requires young migrants to reconfigure their understanding of the world as they internalise these different ascriptions of identity.

Another unexpected element of migrant identity was the discussion of values. The research design did not include a section on values, given that this again would be a challenging topic to discuss with such a mixed sample of students from different backgrounds. However, it was a theme which the migrant young people raised. White, Grabowska, Kaczmarczyk, and Slany (2018) suggest that many conservative Polish families hold traditional family values and can worry that the process of migration may undermines these values. In this study, several Eastern European participants were keen to describe how their value system was different to the one they were encountering in the UK. Further questioning established that this was not simply a parental view, but these young people saw specific examples from their own experience which jarred against their personally held beliefs and values. Each time the topic was raised, the participant explained what their values were and why they were important, explaining how the culture or system of values was different in the UK. Some described it ‘at odds’ with their own. Others saw it as an inevitable continuum with themselves at one end and the culture they were adopting at the other. These observations were unexpected and showed that these young people were actively resisting some elements of a culture that otherwise they were embracing.

In conclusion, this study makes several key conceptual contributions. They are first, that educational success in Scotland is currently defined too narrowly. It measures, records and celebrates certain kinds of success. Neoliberal educational frameworks have led to highly individualised narratives of success which focus on an individuals' ability and motivation to succeed, this has led to many young people to hold competing narratives of success, that it is internally set and individual but also external pressures to conform to a normative standard. The second conceptual contribution discussed is the suggestion that minority identities are being (re)constructed through the transition to adulthood. The impact of varying levels of social and cultural capital can influence how young people variously resist or assert their ethnic identity in a variety of settings. These themes provide numerous avenues for future research including how ethnic and migrant identities change again after school and once further spatial and occupational moves have taken place.

8.4 Methodological contributions

So far in this chapter, there has been a review of the empirical and conceptual contributions. Finally, this section draws together a discussion of the methodological contributions of this research. The section begins by reflecting broadly on the methodological approach, then focuses on the opportunities and challenges of adopting longitudinal research including the ethical and practical challenges of conducting fieldwork in schools.

8.4.1 Mixed methods: its value, opportunities and challenges

The use of an integrated mixed methods approach has been pivotal in this study. Despite their different epistemological foundations qualitative and quantitative methods were integrated in to the research design of this project. The final research question asks what does a mixed method approach bring to

understanding in this field? The following paragraphs will describe some of the opportunities and challenges this presented.

In contrast to previous studies in this field, this research set out to use both types of knowledge to provide description (of more general trends) *and* explanation (uncovering causality or accounting for those trends). For example, quantitative methods were used to explain some of the divergence in post-school destination. These large national datasets were also used to illustrate general trends about the consequences of two or more axes of difference. Equally, qualitative analysis brought vital descriptive narrative as well as explanatory power, thereby expanding the scope of the study, bringing new evidence and fresh insight.

At the outset, the quantitative work created a frame of reference, it provided a national overview of the destinations of all school leavers in Scotland over time. These empirical data were then used to complement the particular narratives, within two Scottish schools, with a cohort of 34 individual school leavers. The administrative datasets allowed the research to examine changes over time (2008-2016) and across space (within Scotland). Using quantitative analysis also ensured the research looked beyond the generic outputs provided in routine government publications, allowing a greater level of scrutiny to these outputs. However, using this in conjunction with the qualitative data brought individual narratives and the opportunity to test ideas which were raised by the quantitative data. For example, early analysis revealed the lower than average progression to Higher Education of certain White Other groups (White Poles specifically), therefore this was used and responded to in the qualitative sampling which was then adjusted to include a greater number of young people from this background. It is important to note that the dialogue between the data was ongoing throughout the research. The qualitative work fed into and augmented the quantitative analysis throughout and vice versa. At times, the in-depth interviews and statistical analysis occurred in the same week, so the qualitative work was infused with recent quantitative findings which could be introduced and explored in the lived reality of transition. The fieldwork also helped refine and adapt the analysis of the national data. For example, initially, Level of English had not been added as a variable in the logistic regression analysis. However, the cohort of school leavers in the qualitative sample included young people who had just arrived in Scotland and spoke very little English and it became apparent that this could make a significant difference

to destination after school, hence Level of English was added to the models. This iterative dialogue, allowing the methods to connect and inform one another over time was crucial. Together, the methods raised questions and allowed a detailed and rich perspective of school leavers' outcomes and experiences.

The research design also unlocked possibilities and brought unanticipated added benefits to the study, for example integrating these methods in a tangible way during the focus group was a personal highlight of the research phase (see Appendix K for details). The purpose of allowing the methods to meet in this way was to see whether young people would narrate the quantitative findings differently from one another. Laying out the crosstabulations between post-school destination and gender, ethnicity, geography and level of deprivation was a turning point in both focus groups. It changed the dynamic because with additional information and the freedom to interpret it, participants stepped into the role of co-producers. They wanted to add their interpretation of the results and relished this opportunity. This process which was filmed and later analysed was a fascinating vignette into mixed methods research, both the challenge and the opportunities it creates. This process, which has been hard to evaluate and explain fully, helped them to understand more how their input was connected to the real world, and this transformed their participation. It is possible that the young people had an increased sense of agency. They were not simply being researched, but were being given permission to take part. This raises a number of questions about the potential to incorporate co-production into future research because in this example, although the mixing of methods shifted their view of the project, the researcher still set the boundaries and remained in control. The sense of agency was in fact false, given that the young people would play no long term role in the analysis and production of the research. As set out by Pain, Kesby and Askins (2011) the use of activist models of knowledge production where knowledge is genuinely co-produced can be transformative. Moreover, this longitudinal approach would lend itself to participative research where research questions are defined through collaboration and the analysis, interpretation and dissemination of findings are conducted jointly (Kesby, 2007). Future research would could also extend the use of non-verbal methods which have been a cornerstone of participatory research, this technique would allow a much broader sample of school leavers, including in different cultural contexts and drawing on the experiences of young people are

often excluded from research, such as those with additional behavioural or support needs and school leavers with disabilities (Cocks, 2006).

8.4.2 Longitudinal approach: value, opportunities and challenges

Benefits (importance and opportunities)

The rationale for opting for repeat interviews in this project was two-fold. First, prior experience of one-off interviews with young people had often failed to capture the dynamic changes which take place for young people over relatively short periods of time. The second reason, as detailed in the methodology was the extensive literature detailing the advantages of repeat interview when working with school leavers (Neale, 2018). The choice to deploy this approach within this study brought significant advances. Firstly, in the opportunity to follow up, to repeat questions and to ask the same questions again. It is important to note (as was discussed in Chapter 4) that the approach was not a positivist one, assuming that any regularity indicated a specific case of a more general law. Rather than a scientific observation, underpinned by logical positivism, this approach allowed the researcher to return to the same participants and discuss similar topics not to compare an answer in one interview with the response to exactly the same question six months later. It in fact exposed difference and heterogeneity rather than generating generalisations. In addition, this approach also provided a real picture of the contours of transition. For example, the specific highs/lows of the lived reality of those final years at school were captured in a way which would not have been possible in a one-off interview. Schools are particularly structured environments with specific daily, weekly and annual rhythms. Therefore, the time points of each interaction (interview/focus group) were carefully selected in consultation with the school. Thirdly, as discussed above with reference to the use of mixed methods, the longitudinal approach benefited from the ongoing conversation with the other methods being used. Finally, the opportunity to return to the same student, in the same school multiple times, allowed for greater risk taking. For example, it provided greater freedom to use techniques and tools which, despite support in the literature or used elsewhere, might not work. The focus group was an example of this; throughout the one-hour session, I used a

range of methods to elicit different types of information as well challenge perceptions, test ideas and provoke a response. Some of these activities (such as using drainpipes to discuss pathways to success) were successful and did prompt discussion, whilst others such as the decision tunnel exercise worked well in one school but less well in another. Knowing the participants and realising this would not be my sole opportunity to interact with them, gave me the confidence to take risks in the methods, and use a range of techniques both in the interviews and focus groups and develop tools which had the potential to fail.

Challenges

One unexpected challenge in the use of this approach centred on expectations. Managing expectations became a common theme and will be revisited when discussing research in schools more broadly below. However, within the longitudinal work specifically, there was potential for an imbalance of power and knowledge. Between each interview, time was invested in listening to the audio file, transcribing interviews and writing a summarising note about each participant with questions to ask, conversations to continue and topics to cover. At the same time, these students had no records, no notes, no sound file of the interview and despite extensive efforts to communicate with the school, participants were rarely given advance notice of the next meeting. As a result, expectations from the young people were naturally low or non-existent. As a researcher, it was critical to build and maintain trust with participants and so this took time and hard work. For some students it took a while to adjust to being back in a small room with 'the lady from St Andrews', whilst others recalled details of the previous interview and were keen to reengage. The timeline tool carried out in the first interview was invaluable at the second interview as it instantly reminded the young person of the interview, of what we had discussed and what they had shared. Expectations were critical and efforts were made not to appear too over familiar with their story or the details which they had shared. As the study progressed (with permission from students) they were emailed in advance to ensure they were given adequate warning of the next interview. Also, more time was allocated for later interviews so that each participant had the opportunity to adjust to the environment and feel unhurried. These expectations, between participants and researchers, as well as between researchers and the school gatekeepers are discussed further in the section below.

Ethical reflections

Some unexpected ethical considerations included pupils discussing their in-depth interviews with one other. Participant confidentiality was a major emphasis in the introductory session and it was anticipated that teachers, rather than pupils, may be interested in what happened in participant interviews. However, at the start of a second interview, several students began with a comment such as, 'I know you have discussed X with Y, here's what I think'. This was unanticipated and required careful handling so as not to concur or breach confidentiality. There were also incidents, with specific pupils, where teaching staff were interested in the 'progress' being made in the interviews. It was helpful to find ways of speaking generically about the broad themes covered in the interview and not disclose insights from individuals. The primary ethical consideration was that of researcher-participants power dynamics. Although participants were reminded that they could withdraw from the project at any point and were not obligated to participate the school environment – where expectations are high, particularly in the senior years, could have made this difficult for pupils. On reflection, an unexpected ethical risk occurred during the focus group. Shifting from several repeat in-depth interviews to a focus groups was useful for the research but for participants this was a potentially uncomfortable experience. Having discussed their experiences individually, participants suddenly found themselves in a room together. The researcher was in a position of power with participants at risk of seeing their confidentiality breached or the individual trust which had been established, somehow eroded. To mitigate this risk, efforts were made to reassure and clarify these expectations at the outset of the focus group. On reflection this was a risky approach and in future it might be important to work even harder to reassure participants of confidentiality and ensure informed consent, were this approach to be adopted again.

One final reflection was the risk that this research would have an impact on the individuals and somehow influence the very aspirations and outcomes under investigation. Often referred to as the Hawthorn Effect (Sedgwick & Greenwood, 2015), researchers can have unintended impact on the subjects they are studying. Cohen et al. (2013) have written about this in the context of research in schools and it is something to consider in future studies. In this project the students were

involved so infrequently that it felt that the opportunity to influence their outlook was minimal, however this is not something that can truly be known. Some pupils clearly did relish the opportunity to discuss their aspirations for the future and eagerly anticipated the next visit, whilst for others this was not the case.

8.4.3 Methodological innovation and contribution

This study throws new light on current debates about innovative mixed methods research. It highlights the epistemological challenges of integrating different approaches and this section has discussed some of the challenges and opportunities with the methodological approach which was selected. The research itself both benefited from and was restricted by being situated within a school environment. Future research, perhaps in a different location, could certainly broaden the field of study and encourage participants experiencing transition to speak about experiences outside of school as well as speak more openly about school. Although potentially it would give rise to another type of situated narrative. Schools, though, often elicit certain modes of behaviour and unwritten conventions about what it is acceptable to discuss and how (for example, the type of language used) (Tate, 2012). To conduct this study in the home environment, potentially with siblings and family members would elicit a different dimension to the research and provide an alternative, less-school based picture of transition. This intergenerational research approach has been used well in other Scottish studies (Ní Laoire, 2011; Sime & Sheridan, 2014) and could be incorporated into the research design here.

Another methodological innovation, which is still a possibility in this study, would be to follow the participants for longer. Research could begin with younger pupils and follow them over time, until they were beyond school and into the workplace. This longer timeframe would enable a clear idea of long-term trajectories and help answer some of the questions raised about what happens to young people from minority and migrant young people after they have left education and enter the labour market. At present there are very few opportunities to build on the quantitative research given the shortage of Scottish schools data about

destinations. In future there will be a new measurement tool, called the 'Participation Measure' and these figures, collected and published by Skills Development Scotland may provide data which can be used to assess the outcomes of school leavers over time. Finally, methodologically it would be excellent to carry out some international comparisons. This could be done by comparing Scottish data alongside other international datasets, potentially through Eurostat with datasets such as PISA. An integrated mixed methods study using longitudinal approaches could assess the outcomes and experiences of school leavers across different national contexts. There are considerable differences in the age at which young people can leave school across Europe and beyond. There are also differences in the level of investment and types of opportunity available for school leavers. Shedding light on youth trajectories and providing opportunities to address persistent educational inequalities which continue to undermine social cohesion, economic growth and reveal expose broader social inequalities in the world's richest nations (UNICEF, 2018).

8.5 Future research

8.5.1 Implications for policy and practice

This thesis connects to many current debates including within education policy, migrant integration, the selectivity of social mobility and the persistence of ethnic inequalities in the UK.

In terms of the research agenda and policy implications, this study raises important policy questions about the education of young people in the senior phase of school. Most notably there is the opportunity to broaden definitions of success and look for innovative ways of measuring achievement beyond grades and normative standards such as economically productive positive destinations. Collaboration is required with the Further and Higher Education sectors to discuss alternatives to the current system which favours some students and not others.

Secondly, the study also raises questions about the integration and support available for migrant young people in the transition to adulthood. In particular, concerns have been raised about the prospects for young Polish school leavers who are not progressing to Higher Education at the same rate as other young people despite aspirations to do so. Poland remains the most common non-UK country of birth in Scotland, accounting for fifteen per cent of the non-UK born population (Table 2-2 page 23). In turn, the number of Polish-born Scottish school leavers continues to grow (more than 200 per year). However robust statistical analysis has revealed that White Polish school leavers (females and males, from all socio-economic backgrounds and geographic regions) are less likely to progress to university than all other minority ethnic groups in Scotland. In addition, these results are confounded by the extensive qualitative research in this thesis which has revealed aspirations to attend Higher Education and high levels of attainment and motivation. This disconnect invites further investigation to assess whether this is a specific new migrant effect for White Poles, whether it is a result of how careers advice and educational support is offered or whether there are specific structural barriers to advanced educational achievement for White Poles.

A third policy implication of this study is in the area of coaching and mentoring. This study contributes to existing evidence on the value of mentoring for young people in transition to adulthood. In many cases the presence of a key influencers who knows the young person well (commonly a class teacher) is critical to supporting a young person through the changing landscape of transition. At present the system for mentoring relies on investment by individual schools, schemes vary across Council Areas and often rely on mentors investing their own time to train and conduct coaching. It is argued that additional investment in to mentoring, within school hours by teaching professionals who express an interest in mentoring/coaching would be an invaluable contribution to supporting the transition of young people from all backgrounds. This opportunity would require very little additional resource. Teachers, who are already familiar with capability of students, would engage in training and then bring their professional and personal experience to support school leavers. In addition, greater innovation is required to

Finally, an important theme to emerge from this thesis has been the existence of hidden racism. Young people often struggle to articulate difference and perceive that discussing differences may somehow be misconstrued as racist. This worrying finding requires a strategic response. The current equalities agenda has made progress in embedding ideas of respect, tolerance and the importance of valuing others. Participants in this study were familiar with the concept of equality and were keen to present themselves as inclusive, however this often resulted in a refusal to discuss difference. It is in this environment, that experiences of discrimination were found to be downplayed and narratives of differences are muted. Further work is required to create an environment where young people feel they have the language to discuss difference and are empowered to call out everyday racism when they see and experience it. One important element in any strategy to address these concerns is in the professional training of adults working with young people, as well as through programs of education and awareness in schools.

8.1.1 Future research

There are many opportunities to develop and extend this research, adding to the substantive, methodological and conceptual contributions discussed above.

This study presents evidence on the growing paradox of ethnic inequality in the UK; that many ethnic and migrants groups appear to perform better than their White British peers at school but this trends is reversed at some point during this period of educational transition. With all the evidence continuing to show that minority ethnic groups on average attend less prestigious Universities (Boliver, 2013, 2016) , graduate with fewer First Class degrees (Hills, 2010; Noden, 2014), are at a higher risk of poverty (Kelly, 2016; Platt, 2007), job insecurity (Jivraj & Simpson, 2015; Simpson et al., 2006) and poorer health outcomes (Nazroo, 2003). This thesis raises questions about whether educational transition is experienced differently by young people from different migrant backgrounds and sets the scene for further research in this field. As well as the White Polish cohort, a significant gender gap was identified among African/Caribbean/Black school leavers (see Chapter 5). The drivers for these differences have not been fully explored in this study and thus questions remain about why these differences exist. The underperformance of Black African and Caribbean boys has been the focus of extensive research in England (Plewis, 2011; Strand, 2014). In Scotland this group is much smaller in size (around 0.01 per cent of the school age population, n=8,348 pupils in 2016/17) and has not been the focus of any empirical studies. These intersections would be a valuable avenue for future research, particularly using qualitative methodologies.

At the same time, the other stark finding in this study relates to the outcomes and experiences of White Scottish school leavers. Research on Whiteness and more specifically the outcomes of White Boys is a bourgeoning field of research (Baldwin, 2012; Byrne, 2006; Rhodes, 2013). This literature resists the idea that race and class are ‘distinct variables locked in a struggle for legitimacy as explanations for social, economic and cultural marginalisation’ (Rhodes, 2013; 64). Findings from this study add to this body of work, adding evidence to the idea that race interacts with class compounding as well as mitigating disadvantage. Therefore, although this research does not focus on White Scottish/British boys, it

adds to the evidence that educational outcomes are often lower, on average, than those of minority groups. In addition, one strength of this study has been to provide comparison with non-White Scottish students and consider social class alongside ethnicity. This study shows that constructions of success are classed and ethnically differentiated in complex and intersecting ways. Further research is required to examine this in more detail with a larger qualitative sample - the sample in this study was skewed towards females with 12 males among 34 participants. Fresh research examining these intersections could interrogate how constructions of success develop over time and, as discussed above, can assess the long term outcomes for White Scottish and minority ethnic groups.

One opportunity to extend the quantitative analysis in future research would be to utilise data which provide additional detail on family background. For example, parental levels of education or current parental occupation. This is a limitation to this study which relies on proxy variables such as eligibility for free school meals and level of neighbourhood deprivation. Future research would benefit from uncovering more in depth information on the socio-economic background of school leavers. Another limitation of the administrative data used in this study was that the current variables do not include details of whether a young person is born in the UK or not. This means a reliance on the ethnicity variable which research shows can change over time (Feng et al., 2015). Details of length of stay in the UK and place of birth would significantly enhance the ability to assess the immigration experience itself on the trajectories of school leavers from migrant backgrounds.

Finally, this study has raised questions about the role of neoliberal educational systems in enabling or not discussions of difference. In the context of an increasingly diverse school age population this is an important research agenda. Harries (2014) suggests that 'we needs talk about race' and this study concurs. Research has the potential to influence policy and practice and increasing dialogue on racial differences, in turn creating opportunities to reverse the current trend to downplay and silence them. However, as Reay (2012) suggests, this will require scrutiny of the neoliberal frameworks which frame the education system and the inequalities which are reflected in society.

8.1.2 Conclusion

The principal aim of this thesis was to investigate the experiences and outcomes of school leavers in Scotland, motivated by a concern for educational inequalities. More specifically it aimed to find out how the educational experiences and outcomes of young people from a migrant or minority background may be distinctive. In a context of widening inequalities and increasing diversity in Scotland, this research has made a timely contribution to understandings of educational inequalities and the transition to adulthood. It has argued that structural inequalities within society are reflected in the education system, which in turn leads to unequal outcomes and differential educational trajectories. These differential trajectories are modified, reinforced and at times mitigated by other forms of difference, including socio-economic status, migration history and geographic location. However, the research shows that these processes are dynamic, and are shaped by axes of difference which can also interact and compound one another.

At the heart of this doctoral study is an integrated approach which has drawn together concepts and methodological approaches which are often addressed separately. It has used innovative longitudinal qualitative fieldwork and rigorous statistical analyses of administrative data, adding fresh insights to this field of research. This thesis raises questions about how educational success is constructed and measured, and how minority identities are negotiated within neoliberal educational environments, and the implications of this for the pathways of young people.

The results show that there are significant differences in post-school destinations depending on ethnic and socio-economic background. Advanced statistical modelling of national trends shows that the odds of going to university for White Polish and White Other pupils are lower than for every other minority ethnic group, even once demographic and differences are taken into account. These results confound the qualitative fieldwork which revealed high aspirations and attainment within these groups. Other ethnic groups outperform the majority White Scottish group, largely as expected from prior knowledge but with some interesting peculiarities to the Scottish case. The research also finds that young people with

a migrant or minority ethnic background can face additional challenges as they experience transition, juggling identities, resisting and at times embracing their migrant identities. Equally, young people also describe learning resilience and flexibility through migration experience and express the importance of migrant identity in enhancing and supporting their transition. The thesis demonstrates that socio-economic, spatial and ethnic differences each shape the interplay between outcomes, experiences and aspirations of school leavers. It shows that understanding differential experiences in transition to adulthood is important, particularly if, in a context of shifting national(istic) politics and neoliberalisation, we are to address inequalities and minority rights.

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Appendices

Appendix A Original Variables

The pupil data contains characteristics of the pupil, as classified by Insight and drawing upon relevant pupil census, destinations and attainment data. These are the variables before recoding.

Pupil file codes

(one row per pupil)

Field Name	Description
projectId	Anonymised identifier for pupil
Insightyear	The year upon which the pupil is classified as a school leaver in Insight (e.g. 2016 represents a 2015/16 leaver)
YearofBirth	4 digit year
gender	The classified gender 1 – Male 2 – Female
datazone	Datazone of pupil (based on 2001 Census output areas)
centre	The SEED code of the centre at which the pupil was based. A 7 digit number.
SummaryDestination	Summary initial destination
DetailedDestination	Detailed initial destination
SummaryFollowUpDestination	Summary follow up destination
DetailedFollowUpDestination	Detailed follow up destination
FollowedUpflag	Whether leaver was followed up from initial to follow up
AdditionalInformation	Any additional information
simd_decile	The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2012 decile of the pupil derived from their home postcode.
EthnicBackground	1 White – Scottish 2 African – African / Scottish / British 3 Caribbean or Black – Caribbean / British / Scottish 5 Asian – Indian/British/Scottish 6 Asian – Pakistani / British / Scottish 7 Asian –Bangladeshi / British / Scottish 8 Asian – Chinese / British / Scottish 9 White – Other 10 Not Disclosed 12 Mixed or multiple ethnic groups 17 Asian – Other 19 White – Gypsy/Traveller

	21	White – Other British
	22	White – Irish
	23	White – Polish
	24	Caribbean or Black – Other
	25	African – Other
	27	Other – Arab
	98	Not Known
	99	Other – Other
NationalIdentity	1	Scottish
	2	English
	3	Northern Irish
	4	Welsh
	5	British
	99	Other
	10	Not Disclosed
	98	Not Known
FreeSchoolMeal Registered	1	Pupils registered as entitled to free school meals
	0	Pupils not registered as entitled to free school meals
La_code	For example 120 Angus 230 Edinburgh City 235 Na h-Eileanan Siar 240 Falkirk 250 Fife 260 Glasgow City 270 Highland 280 Inverclyde 290 Midlothian 360 Shetland Islands 370 South Ayrshire 380 South Lanarkshire 390 Stirling 395 West Dunbartonshire 400 West Lothian	

LevelofEnglish	1 New to English 2 Early Acquisition 3 Developing Competence 4 Competent 5 Fluent EN English as a ”first–language” LC Limited communication NA Not assessed
Level4flag	1 Pupil has achieved 5 or more quals at SCQF level 4 0 Has not achieved 5 or more quals at SCQF level 4
Level5flag	1 Pupil has achieved 5 or more quals at SCQF level 5 0 Has not achieved 5 or more quals at SCQF level
Level6flag	1 Pupil has achieved 3 or more quals at SCQF level 6 0 Has not achieved 3 or more quals at SCQF level 6

Appendix B Comparing case study regions

Census 2011 Summary Statistics of Angus Council Area and City of Edinburgh

	Angus	Edinburgh	Scotland
Population			
All people	115978	476626	5295403
% Males	48.5	48.8	48.5
% Females	51.5	51.2	51.5
% Under 16 years old	17.5	15.1	17.3
% 16 to 64 years old	62.6	70.5	65.9
% 65 years old and over	19.9	14.4	16.8
Ethnicity			
All people	115978	476626	5295403
% White - Scottish	88.2	70.3	84
% White - Other British	7.7	11.8	7.9
% White - Irish	0.5	1.8	1
% White - Polish	0.9	2.7	1.2
% White - Other	1.5	5.2	2
% Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	0.8	5.5	2.7
% Other ethnic groups	0.5	2.8	1.3
Percentage of households where not all persons are in same ethnic group category	10.2	17.2	10.6
National identity			
All people	115978	476626	5295403
% Scottish identity only	66.8	48.8	62.4
% British identity only	7.2	11.4	8.4
% Scottish and British identities only	17.8	18.5	18.3
% Scottish and any other identities	1.6	3.2	1.9
% English identity only	2.5	2.6	2.3
% Any other combination of UK identities (UK only)	1.8	3.4	2
% Other identity	2.2	11.4	4.4
% Other identity and at least one UK identity	0.2	0.8	0.3
Country of birth			
All people	115978	476626	5295403
% Scotland	85.9	70.2	83.3
% England	8.7	12.1	8.7
% Wales	0.3	0.4	0.3

% Northern Ireland	0.6	1.3	0.7
% Republic of Ireland	0.2	1	0.4
% Other EU countries (inc UK part not specified)	2.2	5.9	2.6
% Other countries	2.1	9	4
Length of residence in UK			
All people born outside the UK	5216	75698	369284
% Resident in UK for less than 2 years	15.1	29.1	22.1
% Resident in UK for 2 years or more but less than 5 years	19	22	21.7
% Resident in UK for 5 years or more but less than 10 years	16.5	19.5	18.8
% Resident in UK for 10 years or more	49.4	29.4	37.4
Language			
All people aged 3 and over	112447	460103	5118223
% Speaks English well or very well	98.8	98.1	98.6
% Does not speak English well	1	1.6	1.2
% Does not speak English at all	0.2	0.3	0.2
% Able to speak Gaelic	0.4	0.7	1.1
% Able to speak Scots	38.4	21.3	30.1
% Uses a language other than English at home	3.1	6	3.9
Education			
Percentage 16 to 17 year olds in education	80	83.7	79.8
Percentage of households where no person aged 16 to 64 has a highest level of qualification of Level 2 or above and no person aged 16-18 is a full-time student	49.2	37.4	47.2
Student indicator			
All full-time students aged 18 to 74	3129	49851	259394
% Economically active - employed	45.6	30.4	37.8
% Economically active - unemployed	9	6.9	9
% Economically inactive	45.3	62.7	53.3
Highest qualification			
All persons aged 16 and over	95720	404424	4379072
% With no qualifications	27.3	17.1	26.8
% Highest qualification attained - Level 4 and above	23.6	41.4	26.1

Source: 2011 Census, National Records of Scotland.

Appendix C Ethical Approval

University of St Andrews

University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee
School Of Geography And Geosciences

22nd August 2016
Helen Packwood
Geography and Geosciences

Ethics Reference No: *Please quote this ref on all correspondence*	GG12334
Project Title:	Everyday experiences of transition: education, changes and choices
Researchers Name(s):	Helen Packwood
Supervisor(s):	Dr Nissa Finney & Dr David McCollum

Thank you for submitting your application which was considered by the Geography and Geosciences School Ethics Committee on the date specified below. The following documents were reviewed:

1. Ethical Application Form	15th June 2016
2. Participant Information Sheet	15th June 2016
3. Consent Form	15th June 2016
4. Debriefing Form	15th June 2016
5. Letters to Parents/Children/Head Teachers etc	15th June 2016
6. PVG Approval (Scotland) or Police Check (England/other)	15th June 2016

The University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee (UTREC) approves this study from an ethical point of view. Please note that where approval is given by a School Ethics Committee that committee is part of UTREC and is delegated to act for UTREC.

Approval is given for three years. Projects, which have not commenced within two years of original approval, must be re-submitted to your School Ethics Committee.

You must inform your School Ethics Committee when the research has been completed. If you are unable to complete your research within the 3 three year validation period, you will be required to write to your School Ethics Committee and to UTREC (where approval was given by UTREC) to request an extension or you will need to re-apply.

Any serious adverse events or significant change which occurs in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration, must be reported immediately to the School Ethics Committee, and an Ethical Amendment Form submitted where appropriate.

Approval is given on the understanding that the 'Guidelines for Ethical Research Practice' (http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/media/UTRECguidelines%20Feb%2008.pdf) are adhered to.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Matt Southern
Convenor of the School Ethics Committee

UTREC School of Geography and Geosciences Convenor, Irvine Building, North Street, St Andrews, KY16 9AL
Email: ggethics@st-andrews.ac.uk Tel: 01334 463897

Appendix D Sampling Frame

Original sampling frame used in discussion with school staff

Characteristics	Details	Number of pupils
Socio-economic characteristics	Pupils eligible for a free school meal	At least 5 pupils
	Pupils not eligible for a free school meal	At least 5 pupils
	Pupils living in SIMD 20 areas	At least 5 pupils
	Pupils not living in SIMD 20 areas	At least 5 pupils
Ethnicity / Migrant background	White Scottish pupils	At least 5 pupils
	Pupils from non-White Scottish backgrounds	At least 5 pupils
	Pupils with English as an Additional Language (early acquisition English)	At least 1 pupil
	Pupils with English as an Additional Language ('3=Developing confidence' or '4=Competent')	At least 3 pupils
Academic capabilities	Taking only Highers and Advanced Highers	At least 5 pupils
	Taking only National 4's or National 5's	At least 5 pupils
Post-school destination	Expressed an intention to leave school before the end of S6	At least 2 pupils
	Expressed an intention to remain in school before until the end of S6	At least 2 pupils

Appendix E Information video and flyer for pupils

Video clip – https://vimeo.com/182413972

You will be asked to

1. Share your ideas, thoughts and opinions
2. Take part in three interviews during S5
3. Get permission to take part !

Transition Project

- O Yes - I'd like to take part - tell me more!
- O No - I would rather not take part
- O Maybe - I will get in touch if I'm interested

Your name _____

Your form _____

Helen Packwood
hcp1@st-andrews.ac.uk
@transitionproj

What is the study about?

- The study aims to find out about **young people and their transition to adulthood**
- It will focus on **listening** to the **views** and **experiences of S5 pupils**
- It will explore ideas about the **choices** and **changes** ahead
- It aims to discover what **motivates** or **frustrates** you as well as your **hopes** and **concerns** for the **future**
- The study will run over the next year (**September 2016** to **September 2017**)
- The project will collect and analyse the perspectives of students in several schools including at Tynecastle High School

Why should I take part?

- This is an opportunity to share your **views, ideas** and **opinions** about transition
- Your personal views will be kept **strictly confidential**
- However, the **overall findings** will be used in **national research**
- These findings will be presented to **schools, Universities** and the **Scottish Government**

Appendix F Overview of career aspirations over time

	Pseudonym	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Initial destination
1	Akash	Work in IT	College	College	Further Education
2	Ali	Go to university, not sure what to study	University, not sure subject	University, not sure subject	Higher Education
3	Amelia	Medicine	N/A	N/A	Higher Education
4	Ana	Interior designer	Interior designer	Interior designer	Further Education
5	Becky	Physiotherapist	Doctor or Physiotherapist	Physiotherapist	Higher Education
6	Bonnie	Occupational therapist	College	Health and Social care at college	Further Education
7	Corran	Medicine	Medicine	Biomedical sciences	Higher Education
8	Craig	Earn lots of money	Earn lots of money	Apprenticeship	Apprenticeship
9	Danielle	Don't have a clue	Don’t have a clue	Work at the airport	Employment
10	Eliza	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Higher Education
11	Fabio	Pilot	Work in IT	N/A	N/A
12	Faye	Architect or Designer	Engineering	Aeronautical engineering	Higher Education
13	Freya	Psychology or Law	Law	Law	Higher Education
14	Hamida	Childcare	N/A	N/A	N/A
15	Hope	Medicine	Law	History	Higher Education
16	Josh	Accountant	Mechanic	Go to college	Further Education
17	Katie	Medicine or Law or a Maths teacher	Travel	Law	Higher Education
18	Kerry	Dancer	N/A	N/A	N/A
19	Kieran	Mental health nurse	Mental health nurse	Gap year	Gap Year
20	Kyle	F1 driver / mechanic	College		Further Education
21	Leanne	I really really don't know!	No idea, but not university	No idea, but not university	Unsure
22	Liam	Police	Don’t know	Don’t know	Unsure
23	Lili	Tourism 'Entertainer in Spain'	Tourism	University	Higher Education
24	Lucas	Work in IT	Work in IT	University	Higher Education

25	Ludmila	Don't know	Something in Finance	Something in Finance	Higher Education
26	Lynn	Science	Science	Passing exams	Higher Education
27	Maya	Medicine	Medicine	Medicine	Higher Education
28	Meena	Gap Year	University	University	Higher Education
29	Michael	Aeronautical Engineer	Aeronautical Engineer	Aeronautical Engineer	Higher Education
30	Piotr	Work in IT	Ethical Hacking	Ethical Hacking	Higher Education

Appendix G Consent documents

University of St Andrews

Information Sheet

Project Title:
Everyday experiences of transition: changes and choices

What is the study about?

The study aims to find out about **young people** and their **transition** to adulthood.

It will focus on listening to the **views** and **experiences** of S5 pupils at XXX School.

It will explore your **ideas** about the **choices** and **changes** ahead.

It aims to discover what **motivates** or **frustrates** you as well as your **hopes** and **concerns** for the future.

The study will run over the **next year** (September 2016 to Sept 2017)

This research is being carried out by Helen Packwood (a PhD students) at the University of St. Andrews in the Department of Geography and Sustainable Development at St. Andrews University. Her supervisors are Dr Nissa Finney (Nissa.Finney@st-andrews.ac.uk) and Dr David McCollum (David.McCollum@st-andrews.ac.uk).

Why should I take part?

This is an opportunity to share your views, ideas and opinions about transition.

Your personal views will be kept strictly confidential.

However, the overall findings will be used in national research.

These findings will be presented to schools, Universities and the Scottish Government.

Do I have to take Part?

Your voice matters and it would be good to hear your perspective but you do not have to take part. This information sheet has been written to help you decide if you would like to take part. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be free to withdraw at any time without providing a reason.

What would I be required to do?

You will be asked your views and thoughts on a range of issues relating to being an S5 pupil. You would need to be willing to take part in several informal interviews over the course of the next year. During these informal interviews, you will be given an opportunity to talk about your plans for the future, the decisions you are making as well as your past experiences. You would be free to 'pass' on any questions you did not want to discuss and you would be free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Will my participation be kept confidential?

Yes. Please be assured that any information provided by you for this study will be treated in the strictest confidence. Only the researcher and supervisor(s) in this study will have access to notes and interview transcripts. The information you disclose will not be discussed with parents, school staff or other participants. The only exception to this would be in the event of a child protection concern.

Reward

There is no direct financial reward for participating in this study. However, your views will be used to contribute to a better understanding of young people and their transition to adulthood. You will have an opportunity to learn about and influence research. It may also give you a chance to reflect on your experiences so far and your expectations for the future.

Storage and Destruction of Data Collected

Your data will be stored for a period of at least 3 years before being destroyed, i.e. in an anonymised format on a computer system, which will be password protected for security and confidentiality. The data we collect will be accessible by the researcher(s) involved in this study only, unless explicit consent for wider access is given by means of the consent form.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The analysis will be finalised by December 2017 and written up as part of a doctoral research thesis. Results may also be used to form policy briefing papers and may be discussed at seminars and/or conferences looking at transition. Furthermore, the researchers involved may use their findings for publication in academic journals and/or books. In all cases data will be anonymous.

Are there any potential risks to taking part?

There are no known risks to participating in this study.

Consent and Approval

This research proposal has been scrutinised and been granted Ethical Approval through the University ethical approval process. A full outline of the procedures governed by the University Teaching and Research Ethical Committee is available at http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/utrec/Guidelines/complaints/

Contact Details

Researcher: Helen Packwood

Contact Details: School of Geography and Geosciences, Irvine Building, North Street

St. Andrews, KY16 9AL. hcp1@st-andrews.ac.uk

Participant Consent Form

Project Title:

Everyday experiences of transition: changes and choices

Researchers Name:

Helen Packwood, PhD student, hcp1@st-andrews.ac.uk

The University of St Andrews attaches high priority to the ethical conduct of research. We therefore ask you to consider the following points before signing this form. Your signature confirms that you are happy to participate in the study.

What is Anonymous Data?

The term 'Anonymous Data' refers to data collected by a researcher that has no identifier markers so that even the researcher cannot identify any participant. Consent is still required by the researcher, however no link between the participant's signed consent and the data collected can be made.

Consent

The purpose of this form is to ensure that you are willing to take part in this study and to let you understand what it entails. Signing this form does not commit you to anything you do not wish to do.

Material gathered during this research will be anonymous, so it is impossible to trace back to you. It will be securely stored on secure networks at the Universities of St. Andrews.

I have read and understood the information sheet.	☐ Yes	☐ No
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	☐ Yes	☐ No
I have had my questions answered satisfactorily.	☐ Yes	☐ No
I understand that I can withdraw from the study without having to give an explanation.	☐ Yes	☐ No
I understand that my data once processed will be anonymous and that only the researcher(s) (and supervisors) will have access to the raw data which will be kept confidentially.	☐ Yes	☐ No
I agree to my data (in line with conditions outlined above) being kept by the researcher and being archived and used for further research projects / by other bona fide researchers.	☐ Yes	☐ No
I have been made fully aware of the potential risks associated with this research and am satisfied with the information provided.	☐ Yes	☐ No
I agree to take part in the study	☐ Yes	☐ No

Participation in this research is completely voluntary and your consent is required before you can participate in this research.

Name in Block Capitals

Signature

Date

Parental consent form

Project Title:

Everyday experiences of transition: changes and choices

I ……(your name)

give consent to my child ……(child's name) participating in the research project above.

I have read the Participant Information Sheet provided.

Details of procedures and any risks have been explained to my satisfaction.

I agree to audio/video recording of my child's information and participation. (delete audio/video if preferred)

I am aware that I should retain a copy of the Information Sheet and Consent Form for future reference.

I understand that:

My child may not directly benefit from taking part in this research.

My child is free to withdraw from the project at any time and is free to decline to answer particular questions.

While the information gained in this study will be published as explained, my child will not be identified, and individual information will remain confidential.

Whether my child participates or not, or withdraws after participating, will have no effect on his/her progress in his/her course of study, or results gained.

My child may ask that the recording/observation be stopped at any time, and he/she may withdraw at any time from the session or the research without disadvantage.

Parent/carer signature……Date……..

I certify that I have explained the study to the volunteer and consider that she/he understands what is involved and freely consents to participation.

Researcher's name……

Researcher's signature…… Date……

Parental letter

Re: Everyday experiences of transition project

Dear Parents/Carers,

I write to ask permission for your child to take part in a project running over the next academic year. It will be exploring how young people make the transition to adulthood and is part of a PhD research project based at the University of St Andrews.

The research is designed to explore the motivations, experiences aspirations of pupils as they progress through S5 and will involve a series of short interviews over the course of this academic year.

Pupils are free to discontinue their involvement in the project at any point and are not obliged to be involved. The research will take place during the academic year 2016/17. The analysis will be finalised by December 2017 and written up as part of a doctoral research thesis. Results may also be used to form policy briefing papers and may be discussed at seminars and/or conferences looking at transition.

If you would be willing for your child to take part in this project I would appreciate it if you could sign the enclosed form and return it in the envelope provided. Many thanks in advance for your consideration of this project.

Please let me know if you require further information.

Appendix H Interview 1 Outline and resources

Aims of interview 1

- Ethics – confidentiality and anonymity
- Finalise consent, explain process, opportunity for questions
- Expectation setting
- Timeline: biographical overview
- Motivations, experiences and aspirations of pupils
- Influence of home, school, friends and other networks

Outline

- Introduction (as above)
- Check it is okay to record (Dictaphone)
- **Past Present and Future headings**
    - Over the course of the next three meetings we'll discuss these three things
    - If there are things you do not want to discuss – then please say
    - Today we'll mainly focus on the past
- **Timeline**
    - Lots of local, national and international events have happened since 2000
    - You might remember some of these events…
    - The idea is to add some key events in your life over the past sixteen years
    - If you have brought three photos to summarise life now – let's start with recent things
- **Interview questions**
    - Family
    - Places
    - Identity
    - Friends
    - Growing up

Interview schedule

Timeline

- Tell me a bit about your timeline
- Family/Friends
- Places/Travels
- School
- Growing up/transition

Family

- Can you tell me a bit about your family?
- Parents / siblings / other close family members
- Where did you parents grow up?
- What do your parents do now?

Places

- How long have you lived in [city]?
- Always – go to Q7
- What were your first impressions when you arrived?

- Why did you move? What role did you play in making that decision?
- What are the best /worst things about living here?
- What do you miss from the past?
- Have you ever encountered any difficulties due to moving here? (Racism, Discrimination?)
- Would you say this place is changing? Why ? why not?
- Do you feel settled? Why and why not?

School

- Tell me a bit about your primary / secondary education
- Why did you decide to stay on in S5?
- What/who influenced this decision?
- What one thing would have changed your mind (to leave)?
- What are your current subjects?
- Have you selected your subjects because of future career plans/you enjoy/good at them?
- What preparation have you had for entering the world of work / further / higher education?
- Have you completed any work experience? What impact did this have?
- What are your plans for the future?

Friends

- Where are most of your friends from?
    - Inside school? Outside school?
    - Local / national / international?
- Are you on Facebook? Where are most of your fb friends located?
- Do you notice any differences between your own views and attitudes compared with your friends / those who were born here? In what ways?

School

- Tell me a bit about your primary / secondary education
- Why did you decide to stay on in S5?
- What/who influenced this decision?
- What one thing would have changed your mind (to leave)?
- What are your current subjects?
- Have you selected your subjects because of future career plans/you enjoy/good at them?
- What preparation have you had for entering the world of work / further / higher education?
- Have you completed any work experience? What impact did this have?
- What are your plans for the future?

Identity

- Do you feel Scottish?
- What would you say is your national identity?
- Why would you *not* want to be termed XXX?
- What is identity?
- What do you think is important to making up someone's identity? W

- Which groups do you most identify with? (I'm a ….)
- Do you think it is fixed or can change?
- Is this something you think about much? Is it discussed at home / school? Does it matter?

Growing up / transition

- As you mature do find your views / attitudes changing?
- Do you think coming to school Z, in area X has shaped?
- Your achievements / Your aspirations
- Your views on the world/Scotland/your city/yourself?

Timeline resource

Appendix I Interview 2 Outline and resources

Aims of Interview 2

Focus on longer term trajectories – (i.e. Where/Who will you be in 1, 2, 5, 10 years' time?

Home in on three aspects of transition which have emerged from phase 1 interviews

- Influence of school
- Influence of friends
- Influence identity

Outline

- Welcome back!
- Review Research Plan (below)
- Use interview schedule to –
  Discuss Success/Achievement
    - What do you see as success?
    - What does the school see as success?

  Discuss visualising the future
    - What do you think you would like to be doing in 5, 10, 20 years?

  Discuss school
  Discuss differences
    - How different would this sheet look if
    - You were born into a different family
    - You lived in a different street / city / country
    - You went to a different school
    - You were a different gender
- Ask for an email address
- Ask for a suitable pseudonym
- Close and thank participant!

Interview schedule

Theme	Hypothesis	Interview questions
School	The language of positive destinations is normative 'You feel like you should must achieve in a particular way'	• What does 'future success' look/feel like? (according to you / school / family / friends? • How important is what you do when you leave school? • What do you think the 'ideal' school leaver does? • Have you heard of the phrase 'positive destination'? • What counts as a positive destination? • Is this a helpful phrase? Why? Why not? • Does it have any influence on you / your family / friends? Do they reflect or resist it?
	YP with a trusted 'mentor' are more confident and positive through the uncertainties of transitions	• Who do you trust most to give you advice about the future? Why? • What difference does this make?
Friends	Online networks are significant for shaping plans and aspirations	• What role does the internet play in shaping your plans for future? • How has social media influenced / shaped your ideas about the future? • Do you think your online activity (friendships, people you 'follow') have influenced your plans and aspirations?
Identity – EAL kids?	Experiences of transition are directly influenced by identity and how YP view themselves?	• How do you think being a migrant has shaped your plans for the future? • How has your ethnic background shaped your plans for the future? • Do you think your migrant/ethnic background is likely to be more / less important in the future? • What are the benefits or/and challenges?

Managing change – EAL kids?	YP from certain backgrounds (tbc) are more like to appreciate risks (global to local) undertake 'contingency planning' and discuss failure openly. There is a migration theory that migrants are exposed to risk/change and better and coping. Is this the case for young migrants?	• How much do the following things influence what you think about the future –
		  • Global events (presidents, Prime Ministers, the economy, the environment)
		  • National events (Brexit, Scottish independence)
		  • Local events (things in your family, your community)
		• What 'feelings' comes to your mind when you think about the future?
		• What concerns you the most?
		• What excites you the most?

Cannot test <u>all ideas with all students</u> -

Appendix J Interview 3 Outline and resources

Aims of interview 3

1. Review results and current status
2. Update on plans for the future
3. Ask two questions
    a. What has influenced where you are today?
    b. What do you think will influence your future?
4. Gauge interest to continue with project
5. Reflect on the research process

Outline

1. Nice to see you, how are you doing?
2. We talked a lot about success last time, are you pleased with where you are today?
3. What are your plans now?
4. This is a project about transition so I'm asking two questions today
    a. What is the most important thing to influence where you are today?
    b. What do you think will be the most important thing to influence your future?
5. Thank you for taking part. Can I drop you an email to hear how you're doing?

Resources

Big sheets of paper with two questions printed – 1) What has influenced where you are today? 2) What will influence your future?

Cards printed and cut up

My ability	Decisions made by Universities
My motivation / determination	Decisions made by employers
My location (where I live now)	Decisions made by the Scottish Government
My ethnic background (where my family are from)	Decisions made by the UK Government
My economic background (how rich/poor my family are)	Decisions made by the EU
My personality	Global events
My family (their influence on me)	Decisions made by Angus Council

Appendix K Focus Group Outline and resources

Aims of Focus Group

- Engage with the quantitative data
- Encourage ongoing engagement with the project
- Test ideas around
    - positive destinations
    - managing change
    - social networks
    - part time work

Outline of focus group

1. Welcome (5 minutes)

- Welcome back
- Purpose of the focus group
- Reassurance of confidentiality and ability to 'pass' on activities
- Outline of activities and end time

2. Tubing Challenge (15 minutes)

- The challenge is to get the golf ball from one end of the room into a bucket at the far end.
- Imagine the golf ball is an individual and the bucket is 'future success'!
- What is required to move the ball safely from the start of the course to the end?
- In the activity there will be three groups which will rotate round three areas
  (a) discussing what success is (post it notes on the bucket).
  (b) discussing barriers and challenges (post it notes on awkward shaped bits of tubing)
  (c) discussing supports/encouragements you need (post it notes of pieces of 1m guttering).
- Ten minutes to discuss, rotate, adding your ideas, write post it's, stick them on.
- Then a few goes at getting the ball in the bucket - discussion during the activity

Purpose: to discuss linear/non-linear pathways, dealing with difficulty, what is success?

Extension: what difference does GEOGRAPHY / ETHNICITY / CLASS have on this path?

3. Engagement with statistical data (10 minutes)

- So, we've talked about things that could be in place or go wrong.
- This research also looks at the national data and ask what impact does geography, ethnicity and poverty have on school outcomes?
- What surprises you about the three graphs
- What doesn't surprise you?

4. Decision Tunnel (10 minutes)

- The group stands in two lines, one volunteer stands between the two lines and is our ‘model student’.
- A statement is read out and one line is told to be ‘for’ and the other ‘against’. The person in the middle needs to listen to the arguments put forward by each side and after each statement takes a step forward or backwards.

Yes/**No** – All school leavers have the equal chance of success

Yes/**No** - All school leavers should go to University

Yes/No - School pupils should be allowed to take on part time work

Yes/No - We should abandon the idea of Brexit

Yes/**No** - Social media should be monitored by the State

Yes/**No** – The school leaving age should be raised to 18

5. Final discussion and summary

- Debrief from focus group. Thank the group for participating
- Check contact details are correct and remind participants that the final interview will take place in September for the final interview!

Resources

- iPad for filming
- Spare paper
- Post its
- Drainpipes
- Bucket
- Golf ball
- Yes/No signs for decision alley exercise
- Three graphs (see Chapter 5)
- A3 print off of the sheet (next page)

So, what else influences ‘destination’?

What is the graph saying?

Is this what you would expect?

Why?

Why not?

Does this matter?

Appendix L Feedback from focus groups

Post it note material from focus groups

Things we need to support our path towards success	
School 1 (rural)	School 2 (urban)
Sleep Food and drink Position where you feel at home Confidence Motivation Friends People you don't like (competition) Parents Teachers Work Family School (ordered from most to least important by two students)	Targets Perseverance Determination Support from school Enjoy your goal Cut bad people who are bringing you down from success Keep your head down and focus Ambition Support from parents

Life challenges/unexpected events and circumstances	
School 1 (rural)	School 2 (urban)
Mental or physical health issues Illness Bereavement Lack of motivation/effort Exam stress / exam season Losing a job / problems working Family issues (divorce etc.) Relationship problems Being cushioned (no challenges) Moving house / town Moving school Bad grades	Illness Bad grades Family bereavement Social issues Family issues Drug habits Financial problems Lack of support Fallouts

What is success?	
School 1 (rural)	School 2 (urban)
Success is reaching your full potential Success is achieving something you always wanted To have a well-paid job Success is to be happy / satisfied with your life Comfortable with yourself and life	Reaching a target Fulfilling an achievement Good health Degree Academic Education / grades Make something no one else has invented Money Nice car Big house Good mind set Being happy

Appendix M Coding Tree

Coded	Sources	References
1. Aspirations for the future	86	260
2. Evolving identities	38	64
3. Experiences of transition	23	34
4. Key influences	81	311

Coded	Sources	References
1. Aspirations for the future	**86**	**260**
a. Plan making	59	102
i. Certainty	1	1
ii. Contradictions	1	1
iii. Keeping options open	8	8
iv. Random connections	3	3
v. Recently devised plans	3	3
vi. Uncertainty	15	20
vii. University	15	16
b. Plans about place	38	43
c. Plans in ten years	30	53
i. career vs family	8	10
ii. money	16	19
2. Evolving identities	**38**	**64**
a. Ethnicity	14	18
b. Geography	4	6
c. National identity	20	25
i. Born in the UK	11	12
ii. Not born in the UK	9	13
d. Socio-economic background	12	15
3. Experiences of transition	**23**	**34**
a. Events and activities	0	0
i. EU referendum	13	13
ii. New experiences	17	21
iii. Paid work	14	17
iv. Relationships	4	4
v. Scottish independence	9	9
vi. Travel	14	16
b. Experiences of migration	23	34
i. feeling torn	6	6
ii. Integration	10	17
iii. First day	8	8
iv. language	10	16
v. Scotland	3	4
c. Reflections on transition	0	0
i. Change	11	13
ii. Doing what you don't enjoy	5	5
iii. Emotions	57	112
Anxiety	4	4
Bullying	4	4
confidence	18	21
Disappointment	10	13
Empathy	2	3
Fear	7	8
Frustration	4	4

		Happiness	15	17
		Lonely	2	2
		Mixed emotions	7	7
		Relaxed	7	7
		stress	16	18
	iv.	Expectations	44	69
		Failure	23	27
		Going to Uni is preferred	9	11
		Success	24	28
		a. better than expected	15	18
	v.	Learning from mistakes	4	7
	vi.	Motivation	28	36
		independence and freedom	9	11
		Laziness and challenge	8	9
	vii.	Reluctant remainer	10	12
	viii.	Security	2	2
	ix.	Thing I wish I had known	2	2
4.	**Key influences**		**81**	**311**
a.	Culture		18	26
	i.	music film videos	3	3
	ii.	Social media	16	23
b.	Family		57	80
	i.	Child helping parent	7	9
c.	Friends		34	44
	i.	Friends broad	67	367
d.	Place		19	28
e.	School		41	53
	i.	Purpose of education	29	38
	ii.	Subject choice	27	32
	iii.	Successful students	30	47
f.	What if		33	78
	i.	Different gender	16	16
	ii.	Different geography	18	18
	iii.	Different migrant ethnic background	20	21
	iv.	Different school	9	9
	v.	Different SES	12	13

Appendix N Multilevel Odds ratios of going to Higher Education

Multilevel Odds ratios of going to Higher Education by ethnicity, individual, school and regional characteristics (adjusted for 333 schools)

	Model 1				Model 2				Model 3				Model 4			
	Odds Ratio	P value	95% CI		Odds Ratio	P value	95% CI		Odds Ratio	P value	95% CI		Odds Ratio	P value	95% CI	
Ethnicity																
White Scottish	1				1				1				1			
Asian Chinese	4.55	0	3.9	5.32	3.39	0	2.85	4.04	3.41	0	2.85	4.07	3.4	0	2.85	4.06
Asian Bangladeshi	2.75	0	2.05	3.71	2.28	0	1.65	3.15	2.37	0	1.7	3.3	2.36	0	1.7	3.28
African/Caribbean/Black	2.1	0	1.87	2.36	2.23	0	1.95	2.55	2.27	0	1.98	2.6	2.27	0	1.98	2.6
Asian Other	2.09	0	1.84	2.38	1.87	0	1.61	2.18	1.92	0	1.64	2.24	1.92	0	1.64	2.24
Asian Indian	1.92	0	1.69	2.19	1.61	0	1.39	1.87	1.58	0	1.36	1.83	1.57	0	1.35	1.83
Asian Pakistani	1.81	0	1.69	1.95	1.54	0	1.41	1.69	1.52	0	1.38	1.67	1.52	0	1.38	1.66
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1.31	0	1.2	1.43	1.31	0	1.19	1.45	1.31	0	1.18	1.46	1.31	0	1.18	1.46
Other	1.31	0	1.15	1.51	1.49	0	1.28	1.75	1.5	0	1.27	1.77	1.5	0	1.27	1.77
White Other	1.29	0	1.21	1.37	1.36	0	1.26	1.48	1.36	0	1.25	1.48	1.35	0	1.24	1.47
White - Other British and Irish	1.12	0	1.06	1.18	1.16	0	1.09	1.24	1.16	0	1.09	1.24	1.17	0	1.09	1.25
White Polish	0.92	0.258	0.8	1.06	1.1	0.265	0.93	1.31	1.09	0.34	0.91	1.3	1.09	0.352	0.91	1.29
Not disclosed/Not known	0.76	0	0.7	0.83	0.88	0.01	0.8	0.97	0.89	0.028	0.81	0.99	0.89	0.029	0.81	0.99
Individual characteristics																
Gender																
Male					1				1				1			
Female					1.54	0.000	1.52	1.57	1.55	0.000	1.52	1.58	1.55	0.000	1.52	1.58
Deprivation																
SIMD[9] decile (most deprived)					1.00				1.00				1.00			
2					1.14	0.000	1.09	1.20	1.13	0.000	1.08	1.19	1.13	0.000	1.08	1.19
3					1.32	0.000	1.25	1.38	1.30	0.000	1.24	1.37	1.30	0.000	1.24	1.37
4					1.54	0.000	1.46	1.61	1.52	0.000	1.44	1.60	1.52	0.000	1.44	1.59
5					1.69	0.000	1.61	1.77	1.68	0.000	1.60	1.77	1.68	0.000	1.60	1.77
6					2.02	0.000	1.92	2.12	2.02	0.000	1.92	2.13	2.02	0.000	1.93	2.13
7					2.27	0.000	2.16	2.39	2.24	0.000	2.13	2.36	2.25	0.000	2.14	2.36
8					2.57	0.000	2.45	2.70	2.55	0.000	2.42	2.68	2.54	0.000	2.42	2.67
9					3.09	0.000	2.94	3.24	3.05	0.000	2.90	3.21	3.04	0.000	2.90	3.20
10 (least deprived)					3.70	0.000	3.51	3.90	3.71	0.000	3.52	3.92	3.70	0.000	3.50	3.90
Registered for free school meals																
Not registered					1				1				1			
Registered for FSM					0.47	0.000	0.46	0.49	0.48	0.000	0.46	0.50	0.48	0.000	0.46	0.50
National identity																

[9] Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (Scottish Government 2012)

UK identity[10]	1				1				1			
Other Identity	0.87	0.000	0.82	0.93	0.88	0.000	0.82	0.93	0.88	00.000	0.82	0.93
Level of English												
English as first language	1				1				1			
English not first language[11]	0.88	0.001	0.82	0.95	0.87	0.000	0.81	0.94	0.87	0.000	0.81	0.94
Geography of pupil												
Rural area	1				1				1			
Urban area	1.07	0.000	1.04	1.10	1.07	0.000	1.04	1.11	1.07	0.000	1.04	1.11
Geography of pupil												
Aged 16	1.00				1.00				1.00			
Aged 17	12.21	0.000	11.26	13.25	12.23	0.000	11.24	13.31	12.22	0.000	11.23	13.30
Aged 18	55.71	0.000	51.41	60.37	55.20	0.000	50.78	60.00	55.16	0.000	50.75	59.96
Aged 19	39.14	0.000	35.35	43.34	38.44	0.000	34.56	42.77	38.46	0.000	34.57	42.78
Aged 20	25.40	0.000	14.62	44.12	23.15	0.000	13.06	41.04	23.25	0.000	13.12	41.22
School characteristics												
Deprivation (proportion of pupils living in the most deprived data zones)												
0-25%					1.00				1.00			
26-49%					0.98	0.697	0.91	1.07	1.05	0.220	0.97	1.12
50-75%					0.90	0.120	0.78	1.03	1.01	0.840	0.89	1.15
76-100%					0.80	0.012	0.67	0.95	0.93	0.445	0.78	1.12
Size												
School roll (divided by 100)					1.03	0.000	1.02	1.04	1.03	0.000	1.02	1.04
Denomination of school												
Roman Catholic					1.00				1.00			
Non-Denominational					1.26	0.000	1.14	1.38	1.22	0.000	1.12	1.33
Geography of school												
Urban/Rural measure (higher=more rural)					1.00	0.747	0.97	1.02	1.01	0.529	0.98	1.04
Diversity of school												
Proportion of pupils in school from minority ethnic backgrounds (higher=more)					0.97	0.155	0.93	1.01	0.96	0.072	0.92	1.00
Regional characteristics												
Destinations												
Progression to Higher Education in the Local Authority (%)									1.02	0	1.02	1.03
Universities locally												
Number of Universities in the Local Authority									1.00	0.859	0.98	1.03

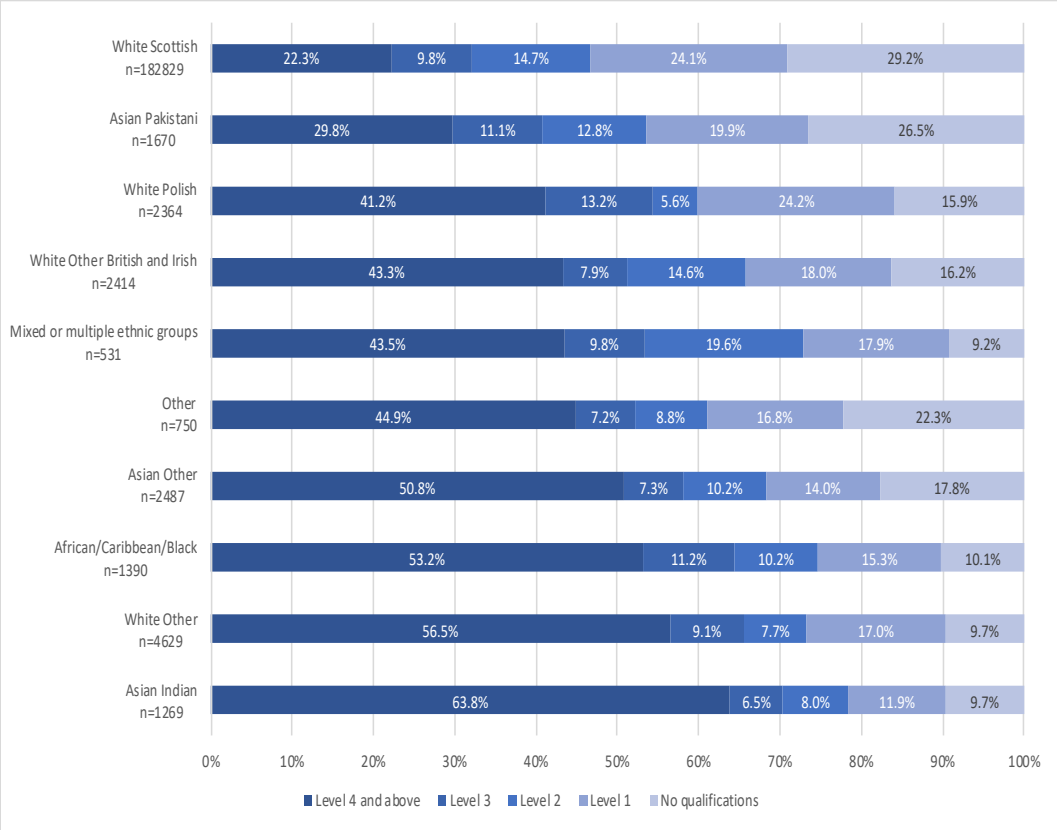
Model	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
N	*257,167*	*256,630*	*239,857*	*239857*
Number of groups	*333*	*361*	*333*	*333*
Wald chi2	*1141.91*	*36362.06*	*34089.88*	*34241.76*

[10] UK identity - Scottish, English, NI, Welsh, British

[11] English as second language or 'other'

Appendix O 2011 Census Microdata

2011 Census microdata sample: Ethnic group by highest level of qualification



Source: Author's own analysis of the 2011 Census safeguarded sample microdata (National Records of Scotland, 2015)

Note: The safeguarded microdata files consist of two random samples, each of 5 per cent of people in the 2011 Census output database for Scotland.

2011 Census microdata sample: Tenure, Employment Status and Approximate Social Grade for White Scottish, White Polish and African/Black/Caribbean groups

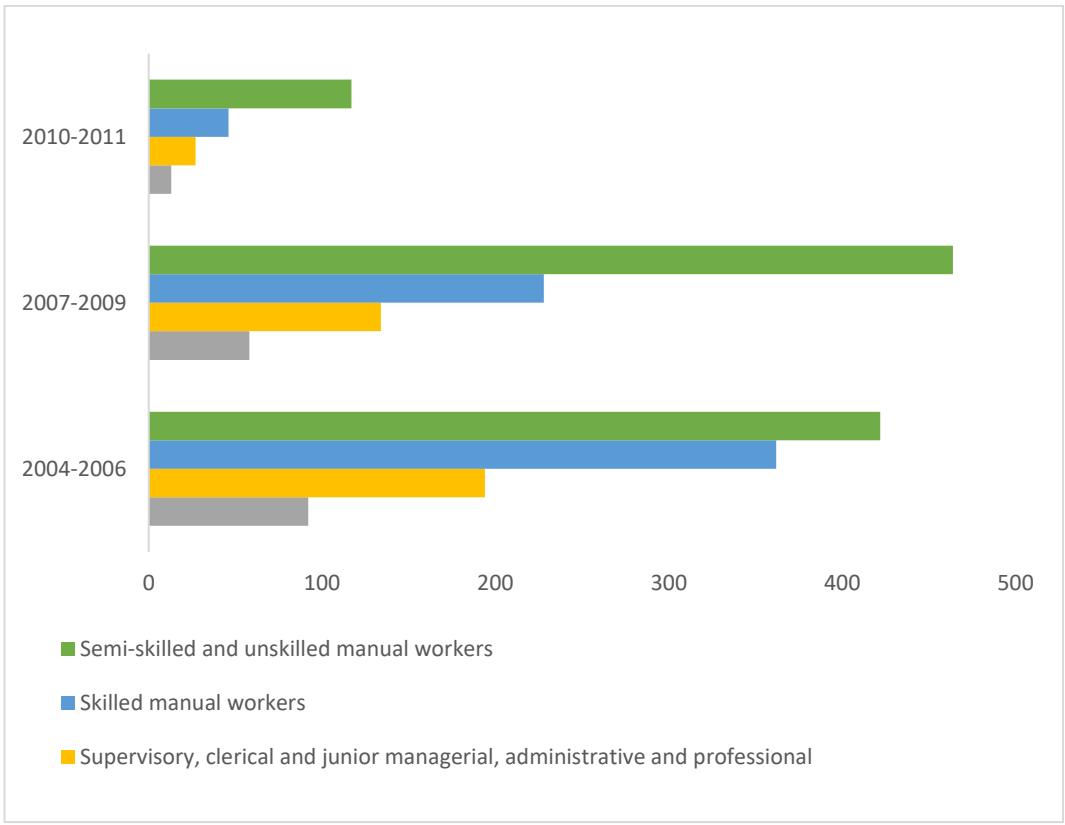
Tenure (percent)			
	African/Black/Caribbean	White Scottish	White Polish
Owns outright	8	24.3	2.6
Owns with a mortgage or loan	30.7	41.7	13
Social Rented	30.4	22.5	31.7
Private Rented or living rent free	29.1	9.9	51
Total	100	100	100
N	*313*	*222379*	*2944*

Employment Status (percent)			
	African/Black/ Caribbean	White Scottish	White Polish
Employee	64.9	69.8	69.8
Self-employed or freelance without employees	5.4	5.2	5.8
Self-employed with employees	1.6	2.4	1.3
Total	100	100	100
N	*313*	*222379*	*2944*

Approximated social grade (percent)			
	African/Black/ Caribbean	White Scottish	White Polish
AB	16	14.6	6.7
C1	30.4	24.4	13.3
C2	10.5	18	22.8
DE	20.4	23.2	35.8
Aged under 16	20.8	17	19.7
Total	100	100	100
N	*313*	*267072*	*2944*

Source: *Author's own analysis of the 2011 Census safeguarded sample microdata (National Records of Scotland, 2015)*

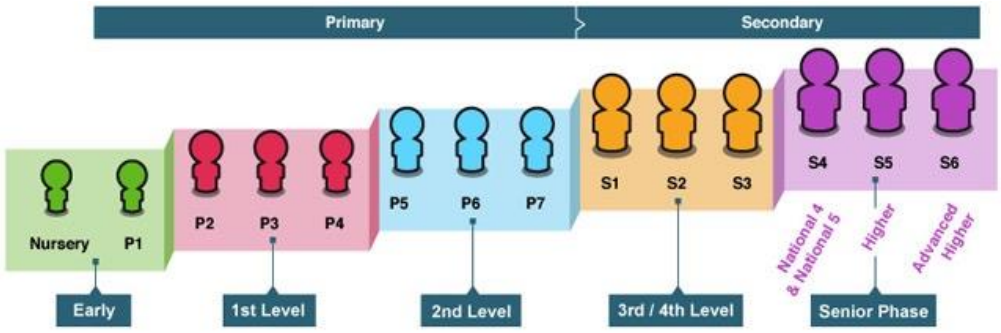
2011 Census microdata sample: Approximated social grade of White Poles by year of arrival in the UK, 2004-2011



Source: Author's own analysis of the 2011 Census safeguarded sample microdata (National Records of Scotland, 2015)

Note: n=2157

Appendix P Scottish Education System summary



School-based pathways

Scottish S4 (aged 15) ***Year 11 equivalent***	**Scottish S5 (aged 16)** ***Year 12 equivalent***	**Scottish S6 (aged 17)** ***Year 13 equivalent***
National 4	National 5	Highers
		National 5's
National 5	National 5's	Highers
	Highers	
National 5	Highers	'Crash' a Higher
		Advanced Highers

Qualifications

What?	**Details**	**When?**
National 4 (Nat 4)	The N4 does not involve formal exams at the end of the course - these courses rely on continuous assessment.	Nat 4's are usually undertaken in S4.
National 5 (Nat 5)	The N5 is the more academically advanced of the national qualifications and involves coursework and a final exam.	Nat 5's are undertaken in S4 by pupils who academically able. Nat 5's are also undertaken in S5 or S6 by pupils who are building on the foundation of a Nat 4 qualification.
Highers	University entrance qualifications involving coursework and final exam. The most able candidates typically take 4-5 Higher subjects	Highers are usually a one-year course taken in either S5 or S6
Advanced Highers	Advanced qualifications also recognised by Universities and employers. Assessed through coursework and a final exam with an emphasis on independent learning. Students may take up to 3.	Only usually taken in S6
Crashing higher	Studying for a Higher in a subject you have not gained a previous qualification for.	Only usually occur in S6 when students have demonstrated that they can achieve a Higher in a comparable subject (another social science/science etc.)